Naia 3 opening postponed anew for security reasons

Story on PAGE A2

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PDI/A18

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Investors coming, says Palace; no, says survey

By Carlito Pablo

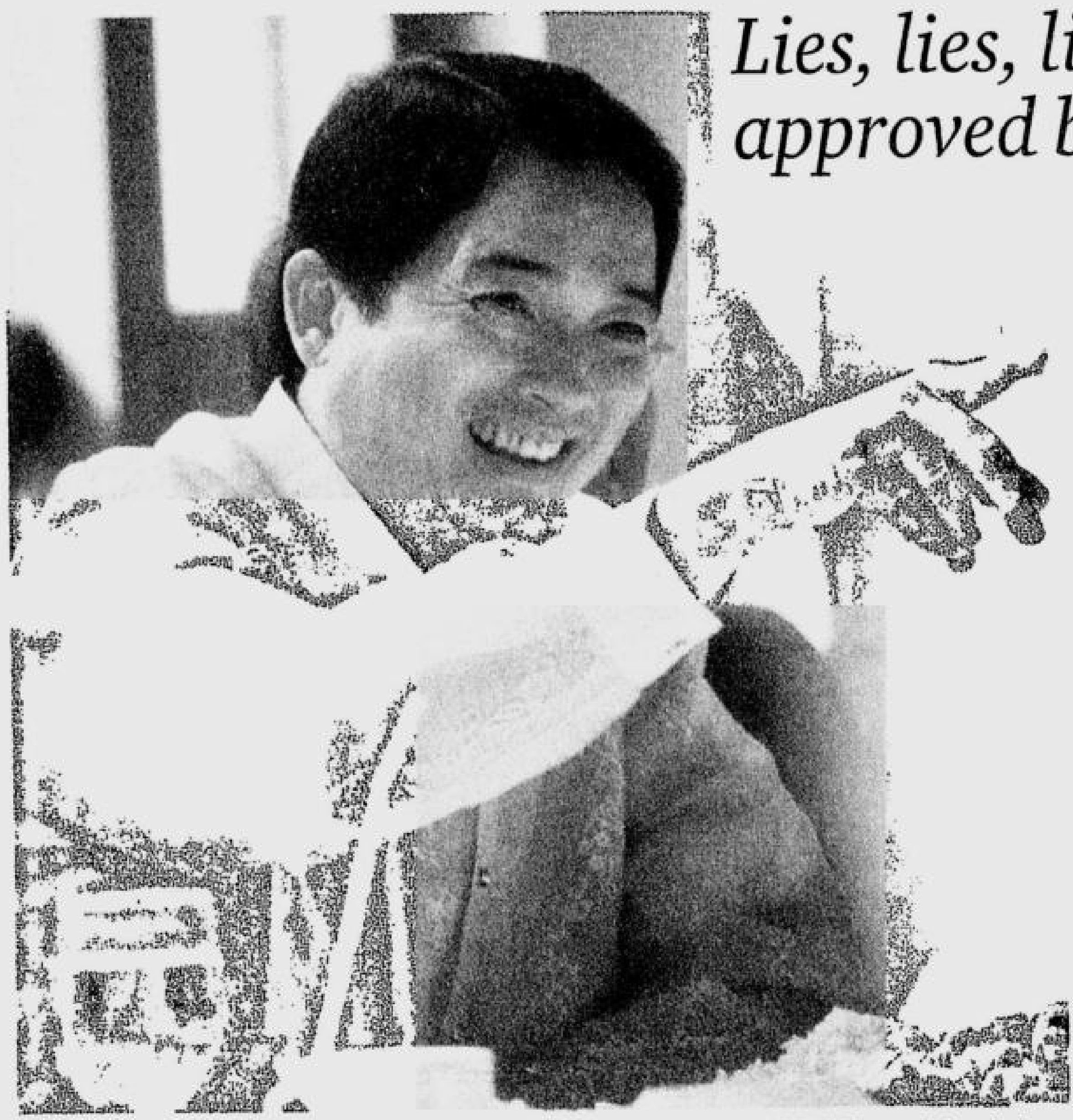
FOREIGN investments are pouring in, and the economy is on track.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao yesterday made this assertion after a survey of multinational companies showed that the Philippines had fallen near the bottom as a preferred invest-

RP/A7

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, November 21, 2002 ★★ 50 pages 3 sections vol. 17 no. 346 P15 website: www.inq7.net

Willie tags Nani suspect



"PROVIDE me with insurance" because of what he's about to say, Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama jokes during his speech before the members and officers of the Philippine Insurers Club on Tuesday. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Lies, lies, lies, says Perez; deal approved by Erap, says Palace

By Juliet L. Javellana, Michael Ubac, Cynthia Balana and Carlito Pablo

AFTER making a great show of pussyfooting all week, Bulacan Rep. Willie B. Villarama yesterday finally came around to expose the "suspect" in the alleged P2-million bribery: Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez.

After Villarama named Perez, the congressman's audience, consisting of the members of the Philippine Insurers Club, fell silent.

"Lies, lies, lies," Perez denounced Villarama. He said he would not step down on the basis of an "unverified report."

He said it would set a bad precedent if a government official would resign because of mere rumors.

At the Palace, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao cleared Perez from allegations that he endorsed the approval of the $470-million contract for the Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan hydroelectric plant won by the Argentine firm, Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad Anonima (Impsa).

Impsa reportedly paid a $ 14-million bribe for the contract's approval. Of this amount, $2 million allegedly went to Perez.

Tiglao said that the contract was approved during the Estrada administration and that Perez merely issued a legal opinion "recognizing the parties involved in the contract as the right parties."

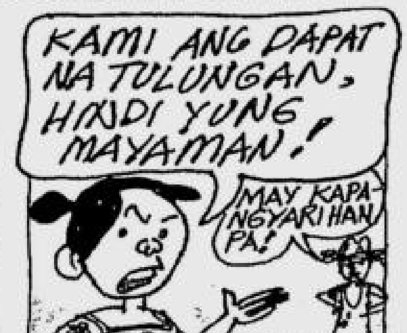
But Villarama clarified that his $2-million exposé was different from the $14-million bribe for the approval of the Impsa contract which Sen. Panfilo Lacson had earlier exposed.

After his speech, Villarama told the INQUIRER that the $2 million and $14 million apparently went

WILLIE/A17

DENNIS SABANGAN

JUSTICE Secretary Hernando Perez: Most unfair. I deny it. It's not true. All he's saying is unverified, hearsay...



KAMI ANG DAPAT NATULUNGAN, HINDI YUNG MAYAMAN!
MAY KAPANGYARIHAN PA!

Vendors decry GMA bias for Lopezes

By Armand Nocum and Agnes E. Donato

"WHAT do the Lopezes have that we don't have?"

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Bacani said street vendors aired this question in the course of noting

VENDORS/A18

Roco raps GMA 'secret meeting' with Lopezes

By Donna S. Cueto, Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Cynthia D. Balana

THE ADMINISTRATION should not bail out the Manila Electric Co. because it will be an added injustice to pay the power firm's P28-billion debt to consumers with their own money, Raul Roco said yesterday.

The former education secretary and senator chided President Macapagal-Arroyo for her "secret meeting" with Meralco executives on Friday, saying she should have considered her office.

Roco said in a phone interview that it could have been a "knee-jerk reaction" for the President to drop all her appointments and decide to meet with the Lopezes who at that time were understandably distressed with the Supreme Court ruling.

However, he said, any commitment made to the Lopez family, such as the formation of a "high-level working group" led by Energy Secretary Vincent Perez to help Meralco, would put the government in a compromising legal situation because the group itself would be a "concentration of power" working to the advantage of the private firm.

"It is so wrong!" Roco said. "How can (the Energy Regulatory Commission) not be pressured then to favor Meralco? How can the ERC then maintain its independence?"

But Rigoberto Tiglao, the President's spokesperson, said Malacañang's "effort is to save Meralco, not any private shareholder."

"We have to support Meralco because it is a public utility company," he said.

Tigalo also said the President's con-

ROCO/A18

Dismiss Meralco petition for rate hike, ERC urged

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE OFFICE of the Solicitor General (OSG), backed by several militant and consumer groups, yesterday asked the Energy Regulatory Commission to dismiss a bid by Manila Electric Co. to increase its rates through the unbundling of charges in electric bills following a Supreme Court decision disallowing the firm's accounting practice.

In its three-page motion, the OSG noted that the high court ruling had disallowed the treatment of income tax as operating expense in the computation of the 12-percent ceiling on return on rate base. Such a practice, according to the high court, had resulted in the overbilling of Meralco customers. The power firm controlled by the Lopez family was ordered to refund its customers.

The OSG said that Meralco's petition for unbundled rate was based on the same principle declared as illegal by the Supreme Court. Meralco's petition "has no more leg to stand on and deserved to be dismissed," the OSG said.

Under the Electric Power Industry Reform Act, all electricity distributors should "unbundle"—or separate into different rate components—the charges reflected in customers' bills. If approved, Meralco's application would result in an average rate increase of a whooping P1.12 per kilowatt-hour.

The OSG also asked the ERC to suspend its hearings until it could decide on the motion for dismissal.

Consumer groups like the Bagong

DISMISS/A18

Church to mount strong opposition against Lacson

By Armand N. Nocum and Agnes Donato

"IF THERE'S a greater attempt, there will be a greater opposition," a ranking Catholic Church official yesterday warned opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson who had urged the wider use of contraceptives to curb the country's balooning population growth.

Manila Auxiliary Bishop Teodoro Bacani said Lacson would have "to reckon with the consequences of that (declaration)." On Tuesday, Lacson in declaring his intention to run for president said he did not fear the Church which advocates the use of natural family planning methods.

While agreeing with Lacson, women's groups are not exactly roaring to vote the wannabe into office.

Bayan Muna Rep. Liza Maza yesterday said she was unimpressed by Lacson's declaration of support for artificial contraceptives simply because it was Lacson talking.

Maza, who leads Gabriela that advocates the right of women to use the family planning method of their choice, said that Lacson's stand on family planning was OK. But can we believe him?" Maza told the INQUIRER.

"We cannot just trust his pronouncements now, considering the way he had flip-flopped on his statements in the past," she added.

Maza recalled that Lacson, when he was still chief of the Philippine National Police, had vowed that he would not run for public office, only to join the senatorial race in 2001.

She also maintained that the senator still had many things to

CHURCH/A18

Silly season starts for 2004 race

By Michael Lim Ubac and Cynthia D. Balana

THE SILLY season is on.

The ruling Lakas is now consolidating "forces" after Sen. Panfilo Lacson was reported as declaring Tuesday his intention to run in the 2004 presidential race.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, Lakas secretary general, told reporters that he would assess the party's strength in the provinces. "We will check who will be trusted to remain with us," he said, but stressed that Lakas still enjoyed the support of most local government officials.

On another front, a movement pushing the candidacy of action star Fernando Poe Jr. yesterday launched a signature drive in Quezon City markets.

SILLY/A6

One Night
One N

DENNIS SABANGAN

CHILDREN'S HOUR. At a benefit Tuesday, President Macapagal graced the fund-raiser along with Children's Hour honorary chair Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala and Inquirer president Alexandra P. Romualdez who's giving the INQUIRER donation to a student from the Center of Excellence in Public Elementary Education.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2002

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will be cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms while the rest of Luzon will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/21/02

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	**Cagayan de Oro**	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Cloudy with Rains

Naia 3 opening put off anew for security reasons

By Abigail L. Ho and Dona Pazzibugan

DESPITE all that fanfare, the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 will not be opening on Dec. 15.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday upheld Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza's opinion that significant security and safety issues should be addressed before even a "soft opening" of the facility could be considered.

In a statement issued yesterday, Department of Transportation and Communications said the need for stringent measures could not be overemphasized, especially after the Bali bombings last month and various intelligence reports citing the Philippines as a prime terrorist target.

The DOTC chief said the perfect procedure precluded the "open terminal" proposal of the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco), the private consortium that owns the franchise to the US$500 million facility.

Under the proposal, which Mendoza said was "unacceptable," non-passengers—like relatives and well-wishers—would undergo thorough checks while departing travelers would be subjected only to profiling and random baggage inspection.

"This concept is a radical departure from existing security procedures which require a 100 percent security check," he added.

Mendoza also cited aviation safety concerns raised by the Air Transportation Office (ATO) that have not been addressed by the consortium.

He said these included the lack of an adequate communication system between Terminal 3, Air Traffic Control Tower and Approach Control; and the absence of perimeter security fences and a dedicated access road for passenger or cargo transfer between Terminals 2 and 3.

In Malacañang, Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said Piatco could be slapped with a penalty if Naia 3 failed to open next month.

The 28-gate terminal, which would handle 13 million passengers annually—four times that of the existing international airport—was originally scheduled to open on Nov. 26. Ms Macapagal moved the date to Dec. 15 following shareholder disputes involving German investor Fraport AG that led to threats of government intervention.

Piatco vicepresident Moises Tolentino said the consortium would "walk the extra mile" to address the government's safety concerns. In a radio interview, Tolentino said the requirements could be met in two months.

He assured the government that Naia 3's security system installed by the German firm Civas was one of the most efficient in the world, and could surpass those of Piatco's counterpart terminals in Europe and the United States.

A Piatco statement said the Dec. 15 opening "may still be achieved."

tBy Mendoza's calculation, it could happen only April or May. He said airlines needed four more months to move their operations to the new terminal. *With a report from AFP*

Post office probes origin of letter bomb

POSTAL officials are seeking Thailand's help in tracing the origin of a letter bomb sent to the Burmese Embassy last week, Postmaster General Nicasio Rodriguez said yesterday.

He said a report from the Philippine National Police showed that the device may have been sent from Thailand.

"We found that the return address was from Thailand. We will make an advisory to (the Thai postal authorities) and request for assistance to find out if the sender was real or fictitious," Rodriguez said in a telephone interview. "We will also refer this to appropriate agencies like Interpol."

Makati police chief Jovito Gutierrez said Friday that embassy officials called police to report the "suspicious" letter, and that a bomb squad immediately dismantled the device, which squad members said could have killed a person.

The envelope, which had a Thai postmark, contained an electronic greeting card that normally plays music. It was rigged with extra battery to ignite a powerful blasting cap, commonly used to detonate larger bombs.

Burma's military government earlier said anti-government groups based in Thailand mailed apparent letter bombs to Burma embassies in Japan, Singapore and Malaysia last month.

Gutierrez said the embassy in Makati had been warned by its home office to be suspicious of letters coming from Bangkok.

Rodriguez said his office lacks equipment, including X-ray machines and bomb-sniffing dogs, and would only call police to send bomb-sniffing dogs whenever suspicious mail is found. *AP*

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Full cabin trim	√	√	√	√	–
2-tone body colors	√	√	–	√	√
Dual aircon	√	√	√	√	√
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Palace may have to make do with 2002 budget, solons say

By Christine O. Avendano

THE MACAPAGAL administration may have to contend with a reenacted 2002 budget for next year.

The House leadership yesterday said that members have agreed in a two-hour majority caucus Tuesday to approve the proposed P804.2.-billion budget for 2003 by the first week of December or by Dec. 4.

But Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales said even if the House delivers on its targeted deadline, the Senate would not be able to do its part.

Gonzales said he was told by Senate President Franklin Drilon in a meeting yesterday that the Senate would not have enough time to approve the budget bill before Congress takes its final break for the year on Dec. 19.

"(Drilon) said normally it would take the Senate two weeks to fine-tune the budget bill (approved by the House) before it can debate on it," Gonzales said in an interview.

"He's (Drilon) not confident (about Senate approval before the break)."

The majority leader said the Senate can approve the budget bill only by January.

The "worst case," Gonzales said, is for Congress to have a "reenacted budget for the month of January."

He echoed Drilon's earlier statement that the delay in the passage of the budget bill was "a result of the proposed budget being submitted on the last day" of the one month the executive branch is given to do so since the start of the opening of the new regular session of Congress.

"Regardless of the stand of the Senate, we (House) can approve the budget bill before the break," he added.

Bank exec's affidavit upsets Erap lawyer

By Volt Contreras

JAILED ex-President Joseph Estrada's camp yesterday fumed over the prosecution's media presentation of an affidavit allegedly executed by former Equitable PCIBank chair George Go, which supports the testimony given by star witness Clarissa Ocampo.

Estrada lawyer Prospero Crescini lashed in open court at Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo's "gross misconduct and impropriety" for giving reporters copies of Go's affidavit on Monday without first presenting the document as evidence in court.

Crescini's tirades marked Ocampo's final day at the stand. The former EPCIB senior vice president—who said she saw then President Estrada sign bank documents as Jose Velarde 15 times in February 2000—underwent cross examination for three hearing days.

In his affidavit, Go relates that at the height of the former president's impeachment trial, Jaime Dichaves tried to replace the bank documents with another set that would carry his signatures instead, but that the switch did not push through because Dichaves failed to get required authorization from the "named principal, Jose Velarde."

The Estrada camp cried foul over the off-court release of the affidavit dated Jan. 2, 2001 which, according to Marcelo, "could corroborate" Ocampo's testimony.

Crescini said Marcelo's move violated legal ethics, particularly for prosecutors. He said Marcelo might have done it to "neutralize" the progress made by the defense in its grilling of Ocampo earlier on the same day.

Marcelo told the court he would welcome any formal pleading that the defense might file over the incident. He reminded the media men, on the other hand, that he brought up the matter of the affidavit because they had sought his reaction to a statement by Crescini, also done off-court.

In post-hearing interviews that day, Crescini alleged that Go had been removed as EPCIB chair upon the influence of civil society groups because he knew the "real story," that Estrada had merely acted as "agent" for Dichaves.

During yesterday's hearing, the defense followed a new tack in proving Dichaves own claim that he is the real Velarde. They pressed Ocampo about a P500 million cashier's check allegedly issued by Dichaves to fund the trust account opened by Estrada when he signed as Velarde.

While recalling that a cashier's check did enter that account, Ocampo said she was not competent to address queries regarding the check, since it concerned the "banking side" of the transaction, and she had handled only the "trust side."

She said she "didn't bother to inquire" why a check was used to fund the account, when Estrada had previously signed a credit-debit authorization to transfer P500 million from a Velarde savings/current account to the trust account.

Jose Velarde "may have changed his instructions to the banking s ide," she said.

Crescini later explained to reporters that the Dichaves check ended up funding the trust account because the bank did not honor the credit-debit authorization, among the documents signed by Estrada in Ocampo's presence.

Zaldy Zshornack is dead

By Marinel R. Cruz

ZSHORNACK

MOVIE actor Zaldy Zshornack, who was known for his role in the 1957 movie "Lo' Waist Gang," succumbed last Monday night to heart failure due to complications caused by diabetes. He was 64.

Zshornack died at 7 p. m. at the Asian Hospital in Alabang, Muntinlupa, after eight days of confinement, long-time friend and TV host German Moreno told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Jose Rizaldy Zshornack, who was named after Jose Rizal, was born on Dec. 30, 1937.

Zshornack is survived by his wife, beauty queen Shirley Gorospe, their three children Garizaldy, Geno and Kim, and grandchildren Sabrina and Andrew.

He was part of the "Lo' Waist Gang" which included action king Fernando Poe Jr., Butch Bautista, Tony Cruz, Boy Francisco, Bobby Gonzales and Berting Labra.

Several days before he died, Zshornack was already too weak to speak and had been communicating to his family only through hand gestures, Moreno said.

Moreno said a neighbor of Zshornack's informed him about the actor's death.

"I was surprised when I heard the news," Moreno said. "I didn't know that he was seriously ill. I know Zaldy used to play golf regularly."

Zshornack had described golf as his "ultimate passion." In 1999, he was director of the executive committee that handled the first Erap Golf Cup.

Moreno said Zshornack helped him raise funds for the family of fellow actor Bobby Gonzales a few months ago.

"We participated in a game in a noontime show to raise money for Bobby who was very ill at that time. (Zaldy) looked so healthy. He played really well," Moreno said.

Gonzales, 68, died of heart failure on Oct. 5.

Zshornack and Gorospe had been married for 42 years. They lived in Los Angeles, California, for some time and had just gone back to Manila last January.

Their romance resulted in a string of musicals and drama movies such as "Sweethearts" in 1957, "Shirley, My Darling" in 1958, "You're My Everything" in 1958, "Hong Kong Honeymoon" in 1960 and "Fil-American Girl" in 1963.

Zshornack set up his own production outfit, ZZ Productions, which made "Bangketa" in 1966.

He received his first best actor award from the Second Quezon Film Festival for the movie "De la Cruz" in 1971. His most recent acting trophy, as best supporting actor, was given by the Film Academy of the Philippines for his portrayal of a police captain in "Kaaway ng Batas" in 1990.

In an interview earlier this year, Zshornack was asked who he would like to bump into during his travels. He named Paul Newman and two dead actors—Marilyn Monroe and James Dean.

His body lies at the Funeraria Paz in Sucat, Parañaque and will be cremated on Su[illegible]day after the 9 a. m. Mass.

Soldier, reb slain in N. Ecija clash

SAN JOSE CITY—One soldier and a communist rebel were killed in an encounter here yesterday, the military said.

The soldier was identiied as Cpl. Tony Caballero. The rebel fatality has yet to be identified. Another soldier, Cpl. Julius Curameng, was wounded.

The Army's Northern Luzon Command, in a statement, said the attack on 100 armed New People's Army rebels last week had foiled an offensive by the NPA on vital installations in Aurora and Nueva Ecija. *Anselmo Roque with a report from Russell Arador, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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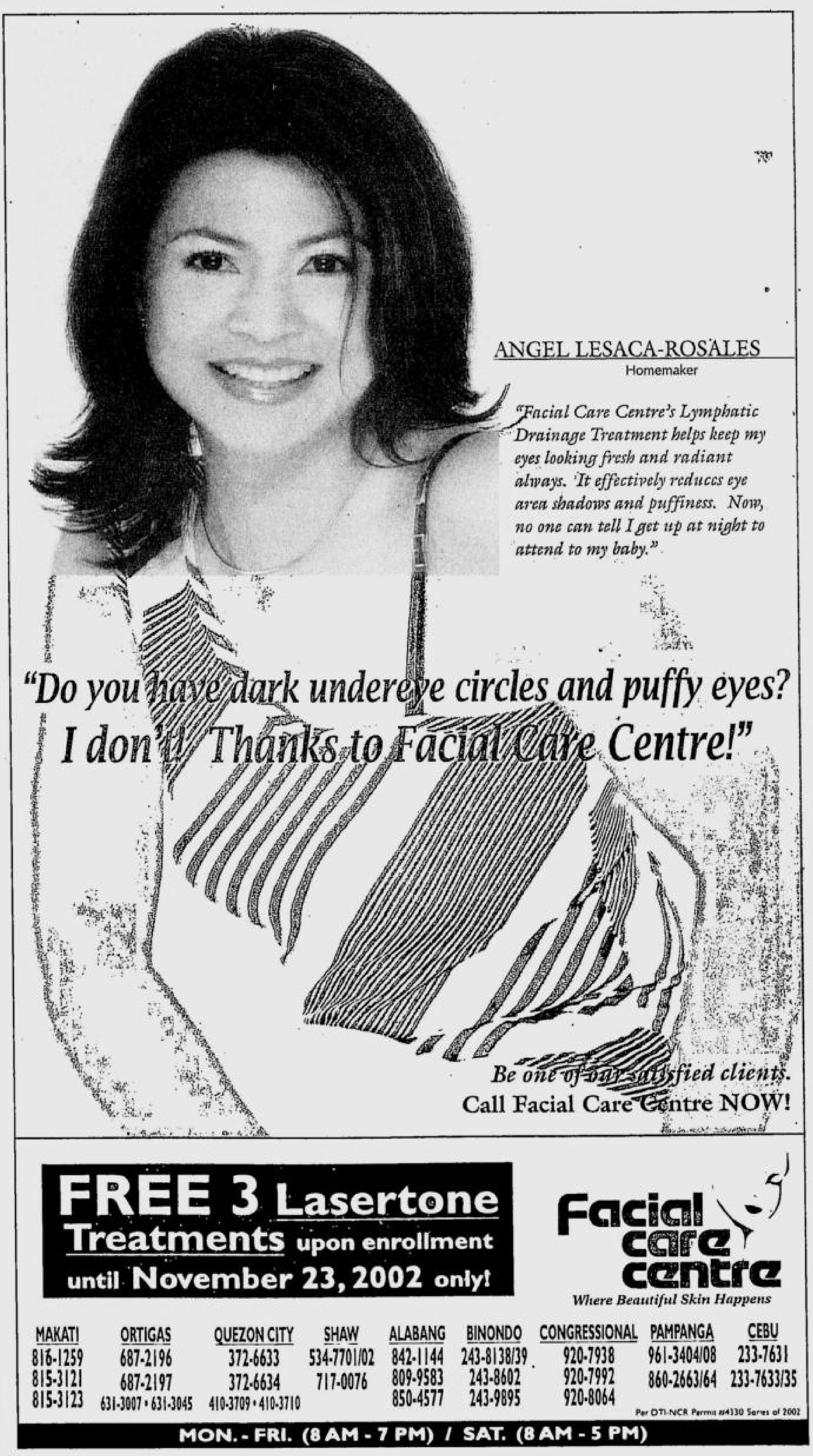
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MON.-FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SAT. (8 AM - 5 PM)

U.P. Law Alumni Association

2002 Grand Alumni Homecoming Today

Messages

MALACAÑANG PALACE
MANILA

My fondest felicitations to the Class of 1977, Silver Jubilarians, and to the rest of the University of the Philippines Law Alumni on your homecoming celebration for the year 2002.

The University of the Philippines is a proven cornerstone to national development. It is not without coincidence that many of this country's leaders have come from the ranks of your *alma mater*, particularly from the College of Law. Occasions like this foster solidarity among the alumni and provide a welcome opportunity to promote unit and cooperation among the nation's movers.

I happily note that the celebrating Silver Jubilee Class of 1977, typical of the classes of the U.P. College of Law , has already ,made its own indelible mark in nation building. Quite a number of the Class are serving or have served in various capacities in the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. Many others in the private sector have made their own significant contributions to the country's progress by serving as legal counsel to the country's business and political leaders. Your continued commitment as partners in progress with the government is well appreciated.

It is with even greater pleasure that I recognized the persistent efforts of the U.P. Law Alumni Association to uphold the rule of law in this country. After all, the rule of law is essential for the stability needed as a base for the nation's dynamic growth. Let us continue to join hands in building a better tomorrow for our people.

Mabuhay!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

UP LAW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION, INC.

It is with great pride that I extend my felicitations to all alumni of the UP College of Law in holding this year's Alumni Homecoming.

The UP College of Law has been a cornerstone in the development of law and the legal profession. Thus, it is not surprising that the sponsor of this year's celebration, the Class of 1977, has undertaken new and exciting roads of legal development. For one, the creation of the www.uplawalumni.com exemplifies the innovative spirit that resides in every soul from the UP College of Law and answers the call for easier and faster exchange of ideas in these upbeat times.

However, what amazes me more in this year's celebration is the emphasis given on the UP law alumnus' achievement, not only in the legal field, but also in other fields of human endeavor. The persons and ideals that make us smile or do wondrous deeds are given recognition, for easily, the things that matter are lost in the rush of modern life. I fully support this rethinking of life and how the same is lived.

It is in this that I congratulate all the officers and members of UP Law Alumni Association, especially our Silver Jubilarians. May our celebration for being UP lawyers be also a celebration of life.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!

ALFONSO R. REYNO, JR.
Chairman

It is with great enthusiasm that our Class of 1977 hosts this year's annual homecoming on November 21, 2002 at the Makati Shangri-La.

Our class has tried its best to give you an enjoyable program and to provide the atmosphere for you to enjoy each other's company.

The theme for this year: "timeless achievers" wishes to focus on the activities of our classmates other than the law, which have made them well-rounded individuals.

I would also like to thank all of my classmates for contributing to the success of the following projects:

a) renovation and refurbishment of a classroom at the UP College of Law;
b) creation of the UP Law Alumni Association website;
c) establishment of scholarships for law students;
d) family reunion of Class 1977 at the Baguio Country Club;
e) golf tournament at Manila Golf;
f) T.V. talk show featuring Class 1977;
g) publication of the souvenir program; and
h) hosting of the 2002 alumni homecoming and reunion.

Lastly, we wish to thank all the classes who have helped us in these endeavors.

AVELINO J. CRUZ, JR.
President

Class of 1977: 2002 Silver Jubilarians

A Legacy Beyond the College of Law and the Alumni

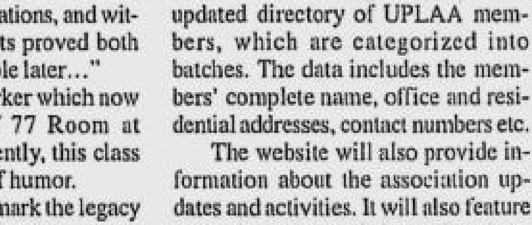
"With gratitude to the college that educated us in crucial years of our study of law, we commit our continuous and unwavering support. We begin with the renovation of this room that heard our first recitations, and witnessed a hundred stunts proved both humorous and incredible later..."

Thus reads the marker which now adorns the Class of 77 Room at Malcolm Hall. Apparently, this class has not lost its sense of humor.

"In this room, we mark the legacy that we want to uphold and pass on to those who come after us. In this room, may their knowledge of the law enlighten their lives, may their continuous study beyond their final blue books lead them to diverse fields, as our respective careers continue to open new doors to our daily fulfillment.", the marker goes on in more somber tones.

But the blessings being shared by Class '77 reflects the humor of their time and the trends 25 years later: Classroom amenities; Cyberaccess; scholarships.

Batch 1977 turned over to the UP College of Law last July 29, 2002, a renovated classroom in ceremonies witnessed by Chief Justice Hilario Davide, and members of the faculty and students of the College of Law.



UPLAA website launching. Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr. delivers a remark in the launching of UPLAA's website.

Batch 77 has also established the first official website (www.uplawalumni .com) for UPLAA members to foster social as well as professional interaction and even rekindle old school ties through cyberspace.

The website contains a veritable wealth of information about UPLAA, including brief history, aims and objectives, achievements, bits about members' an the roster of the past presidents.

One of the immediate objectives of the website is to give browsers an updated directory of UPLAA members, which are categorized into batches. The data includes the members' complete name, office and residential addresses, contact numbers etc.

The website will also provide information about the association updates and activities. It will also feature up-to-date relevant information about law and jurisprudence.

All members are encouraged to visit the website and log in their names, addresses and contribute other information including news from other batches and classmates to enliven the wealth of social and useful information. Suggestions are also welcomed to make the website truly interesting and useful even to non-UPLAA browsers. With the cooperation of the alumni, the Class of 1977 is confident that this endeavor for whom the pursuit of the timeless study and practice of law is an achievement in itself, will succeed in passing on to the next Silver Jubilarians the website.

Class of 1977 has also instituted a scholarship program for deserving students of the College of Law ●

Timeless Achievers

Excellence beyond law, beyond time

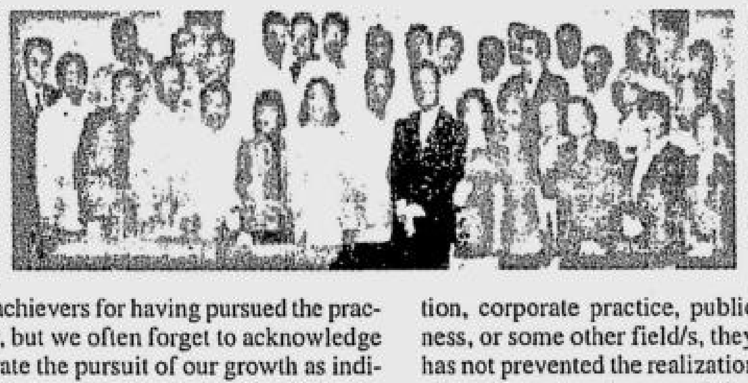
"It is with even greater pleasure that I recognized the persistent efforts of the U.P. Law Alumni Association to uphold the rule of law in this country."
-- President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

The University of the Philippines Law Alumni Association celebrates its 91st Grand Alumni Homecoming on the 21st of November at the Rizal Ballroom of the Shangri-La Plaza Hotel.

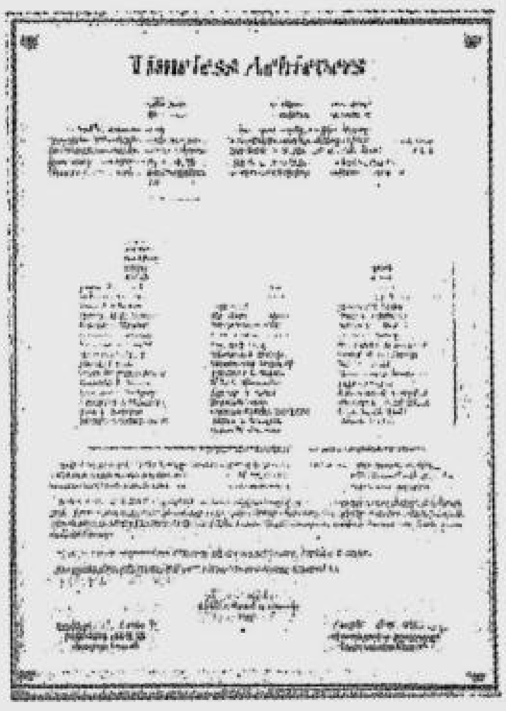
UP Law Alumni Association President and Chief Presidential Legal Counsel Avelino J. Cruz, Jr. will deliver the welcome remarks, while the keynote address will be delivered by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Other guests of honor include Senate President Franklin M. Drilon and Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, who will be presented the Timeless Achievement Awards by the Class of 1977, the host class, in line with this year's theme.

The theme "Timeless Achievers: Excellence Beyond Law, Beyond Time" arose from a consensus that there was no better time to redefine the concept of achievement. The Silver Jubilarians find they have successfully endeavored, after all, in various fields of the law and of life. Atty. Ferdinand Domingo, UPLAA Executive Vice President and Overall Homecoming Coordinator for Class '77, observers, "It is true we are all achievers for having pursued the practice of law, but we often forget to acknowledge and celebrate the pursuit of our growth as individuals in the course of such practice." The focus on our achievements beyond the realm of the law: "We celebrate the success, not only of a lawyer who has become a chief presidential legal counsel - as a classmate has become - but also of the individual who can perform flawless Etudes on any occasion - as another classmate has demonstrated. "



At the heart of the homecoming appears to be the matter of the lawyers' respective roles beyond the theater of the court. Upon the question of performance beyond the field of law, the Class of 1977 reflects, "it is perhaps precisely because the answer is a casual 'so far, so good' that we do not often consider nor celebrate our success in such matters which cannot be measured by the time a plaque of recognition has rested on our shelves, as achievement." The celebrants take pride in the fact that they are good fathers and mothers, have fulfilled their duties as service volunteers in their communities, as active parish workers, and as class parent representatives in their children's schools. Twenty-five years after graduation, they continue to engage in activities outside their profession, such as painting, Bible reading and lay ministry, meditation, farming, playing golf and billiards, and running. Whether engaged in litigation, corporate practice, public service, business, or some other field/s, they find that work has not prevented the realization of other goals, which has in turn improved the quality of their work.



Timeless Achievers

The host class "has learned that the study of law spans a lifetime, and the practice of law - timeless as it is - is all that we make of this lifetime, which includes the utilization of our talents and our passions in our way of living."

The Silver Jubilarians, who celebrate with the Class of 1952, the Golden Jubilarians, wish to extend an invitation to all their fellow Timeless Achievers. Ms. Lani Misalucha and the Spirit of '67 Band will provide the evening's entertainment fare. The Manila Cathedral Men's Choir will render the alma mater song "UP Beloved" and the Manila Brass Quintet will provide the Dinner Entertainment ●

Timeless Achiever Awardees: A Profile

For their outstanding contributions to the country and the society, Senate President Franklin M. Drilon and Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr., will be conferred the Timeless Achiever Award on the occasion of the UPLAA Grand Alumni Homecoming tonight.

Senate President Drilon of Class '69 is honored with the award by UPLAA and the Silver Jubilarians, in recognition of his commitment and sterling performance as a lawmaker and an outstanding government official. He is also lauded for his staunch advocacy in preserving the integrity of the Philippine Senate, as the voice of the hopes and aspirations of our countrymen.

He has a long history of outstanding service in the government, highlighted by his stints as Secretary of the Department of Justice, Department of Labor and Employment and Executive- Secretary. As a private law practitioner, he has also shown a high degree of excellence, especially in championing the rights of the poor and underprivileged. He is also cited for his remarkable contribution in his chosen profession, serving as an excellent role model of an honest and competent lawyer.

He is best remembered as the Senate President who willingly yielded his powerful position when his principles and the people's will run in conflict with the past administration. His actions helped define the course of history of our country. He is a big man with a kind heart, an epitome of a principled man whose integrity cannot be questioned. During those momentous events he showed that crying is not a sign of weakness but rather an expression of triumph over the pitfalls and lures of corruption and evil.

Hon. Hilario G. Davide, Jr. of Class '59, is conferred with the award for upholding the people's faith and trust in the Highest Tribunal of the Land at critical defining moments in our history. He is also acknowledged for having an extraordinary and independent legal mind in serving as Delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1971 and Member of the Constitutional Commission of 1986, which drafted both the 1973 and 1987 Constitutions. Chief Justice Davide was assemblyman and first minority floor leader of the Interim Batasang Pambansa.

During his tenure as a lawmaker he had filed the most number of significant bills and resolutions to lift martial law, authored Anti Graft and Corruption amendments, and several amendments of the draft Constitution of the land, exemplifying his brilliant legal mind. As a COMELEC Chairman, it is under his term and integrity the cleanest elections in the history of this country were held.

Of awards, he has garnered a myriad over the years of public service, the latest being the much covered Ramon Magsaysay Award for Government Service. To name a few more, he has garnered the Jose P. Laurel Award, the Rule of Law Award from the Chief Justice Teehankee Foundation, the Grand Perlas Award, an Award of Excellence for his performance in the Impeachment Trial, the Plaque of Merit from the Supreme Knight, Knights of Columbus and the Plaque of Merit from the IBP.

He is also being honored with the award for imbuing nobility to the law profession as a constitutionalist, lawmaker, and professor. This humanitarian spirit once said : "What makes us human most of all are our efforts to raise the less fortunate, the vulnerable sectors, from jungle-like conditions where survival of the fittest is the rule, to a humanized state of affairs where protection of the weakest is the norm. This I have tried to do through the faithful fulfillment of my duties in whatever office I have occupied, as a private practitioner of law and as a civil servant."

Both of these two legal stalwarts are acknowledged "Timeless Achievers" beyond the realm of law and time as model citizen, leader, scholar, gentleman, father and friend. Both are powerful shakers and movers of society whose accomplishments will forever exceed their names —a legacy of greatness ●

PROGRAM

PM
5:00 Registration
Doors Open
6:30 Guests take their seats
Processional: Entry of Silver Jubilarians
National Anthem
Invocation: The Lords Prayer
UP Beloved
Manila Cathedral Men's Choir
Welcome Address: Atty. Avelino J. Cruz, Jr.
President, UP Law Alumni Association, Inc.
Video Presentations

1. UPLAA Board of Directors
2. Class Representatives
3. Celebrating Classes
   - emerald - 1947
   - sapphire - 1957
   - ruby - 1962
   - coral - 1967
   - pearl - 1972
   - china - 1982
   - crystal - 1987
   - tin - 1992
   - wood - 1997
4. The Golden Jubilarians – Class of 1952

Presentation of Timeless Achievers Award to:
Senate President Franklin N. Drilon and
Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide, Jr.
Video Presentation of the Silver Jubilarians –
Class of 1977, Timeless Achievers
Introduction of Her Excellency
Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
Keynote Address: President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo
Dinner: musical number by Ms.
Lani Misalucha
Dancing with Spirit '67 Band
Music from the Renaissance
Manila Brass Quintet

UPLAA: A Forum for Excellence in Life

In 1913, the UP College of Law produced its first batch of graduates. Since that time, brilliant and distinguished graduates have passed through its portals. While the graduates maintained their old school ties in the Commonwealth period, Second World War and the martial law years this had largely been through informal associations carried over from their college years.

It was not until January 9, 1973 that the loose and informal association of the UP Law Alumni was formalized with the incorporation of the University of the Philippines Law Alumni Association, Inc. (UPLAA). The bond that had been built between the College and its Alumni was given due recognition in the establishment of the association.

Sending their prestige and reputation to the association were the following founding incorporators: Vicente Abad Santos, Ambrosio Padilla, Jose P. Bengzon, Irene Cortes, Gonzalo W. Gonzales, Ameurfina M. Herrera, Jesus G. Barrera, Emilio Abello, Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, Catalino Macaraeg, Jr., Felix Makasiar, Arturo Tolentino, Juan Ponce Enrile, Camilo Quiazon and Jose C. Campos, a veritable roster of luminaries that span almost a hundred years of law practice.

While UPLAA is dedicated to fostering the tradition of excellence ingrained among the country's current and emerging leaders, UPLA also provides the forum for the free exchange of ideas, thereby serving as an enlightening influence in national development.

A year after UPLAA's founding the UPLAA Board of Directors established the UP Law Alumni Foundation which has become the vehicle for promoting and encouraging research and development in the varied fields of law and public administration ●

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Southeast Asian countries join hands vs terrorism

SOUTHEAST Asian countries are cooperating to thwart possible terror attacks by a recently discovered Muslim extremist umbrella group aiming to transform the region into an Islamic stronghold by force, according to an intelligence official and confidential documents.

Muslim militants linked to the al-Qaida network and its Southeast Asian ally, Jemaah Islamiyah, established Rabitatul Mujahedeen (League of Holy Warriors) to unite all Islamic extremists in the region and launch strikes against governments there, police intelligence documents said.

The documents said the new group was formed in 1999 in Malaysia and uncovered this year through disclosures by suspected terrorists arrested in Singapore and Manila.

Deadly bombings in 2000 that struck the Philippine ambassador's residence in Jakarta, Indonesia, and other targets in the sprawling Muslim nation may have been Rabitatul Mujahedeen's initial terror projects, as well as five almost simultaneous blasts in Metro Manila, the documents said.

"It's been set up," Supt. Robert Delfin, who heads the Philippine National Police intelligence, told The Associated Press by telephone yesterday. "It's like an umbrella group, but no matter the extent of their network, we can monitor them. We know the personalities."

Malaysia, Singapore and the Philippines are cooperating and exchanging information on the new group and discussing how to thwart its plans and arrest members, Delfin said.

One proposal is to establish a single list, or "order of battle," that would include all wanted terror suspects in Southeast Asia, including known members of Rabitatul Mujahedeen and Jemaah Islamiyah and al-Qaida operatives, Delfin said.

Representatives from Islamic militant groups from Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Egypt —including Jemaah Islamiyah—attended at least three covert meetings in Malaysia to establish the new group in 1999-2000, according to the confidential documents, adding that militants from Bangladesh also are involved.

Abu Bakar Bashir, the alleged spiritual leader of Jemaah Islamiyah now under arrest in Indonesia,. was reportedly chosen to head the new group. Fellow Indonesian Riduan Isamuddin, who has been implicated in operations to support the Sept. 11 hijackers, was designated as secretary general, the documents said. Also known as Hambali, he remains at large.

Police officials traveled to Singapore and interrogated a suspected Malaysian terrorist, Faiz Abu Bakar Bafana, on Oct. 29-30, the intelligence documents said.

Bafana provided limited details about Rabitatul Mujahedeen and pledged to tell more in exchange for immunity from prosecution in connection with current and future terror charges against him, the documents said.

Bafana and Hambali recently were indicted in absentia in the Philippines, where they allegedly financed the procurement of 1.2 tons of explosives intended for a plot to bomb the US Embassy and other Western targets in Singapore early this year. *AFP*

Source of 'gift' bomb yields

STA. CRUZ, Ilocos Sur—The man who asked the tricycle driver to deliver the deadly package to Leopoldo Caligtan surrendered to the police here yesterday to clear his name.

Tricycle driver Ricardo Acosta, 50, told investigators that a man approached him in nearby Sta. Lucia town and gave him P200 to deliver a gift package to Caligtan.

But Acosta of Barangay Ayusan in Sta. Lucia asked another driver, Elias Jandoc, to deliver it instead for P70.

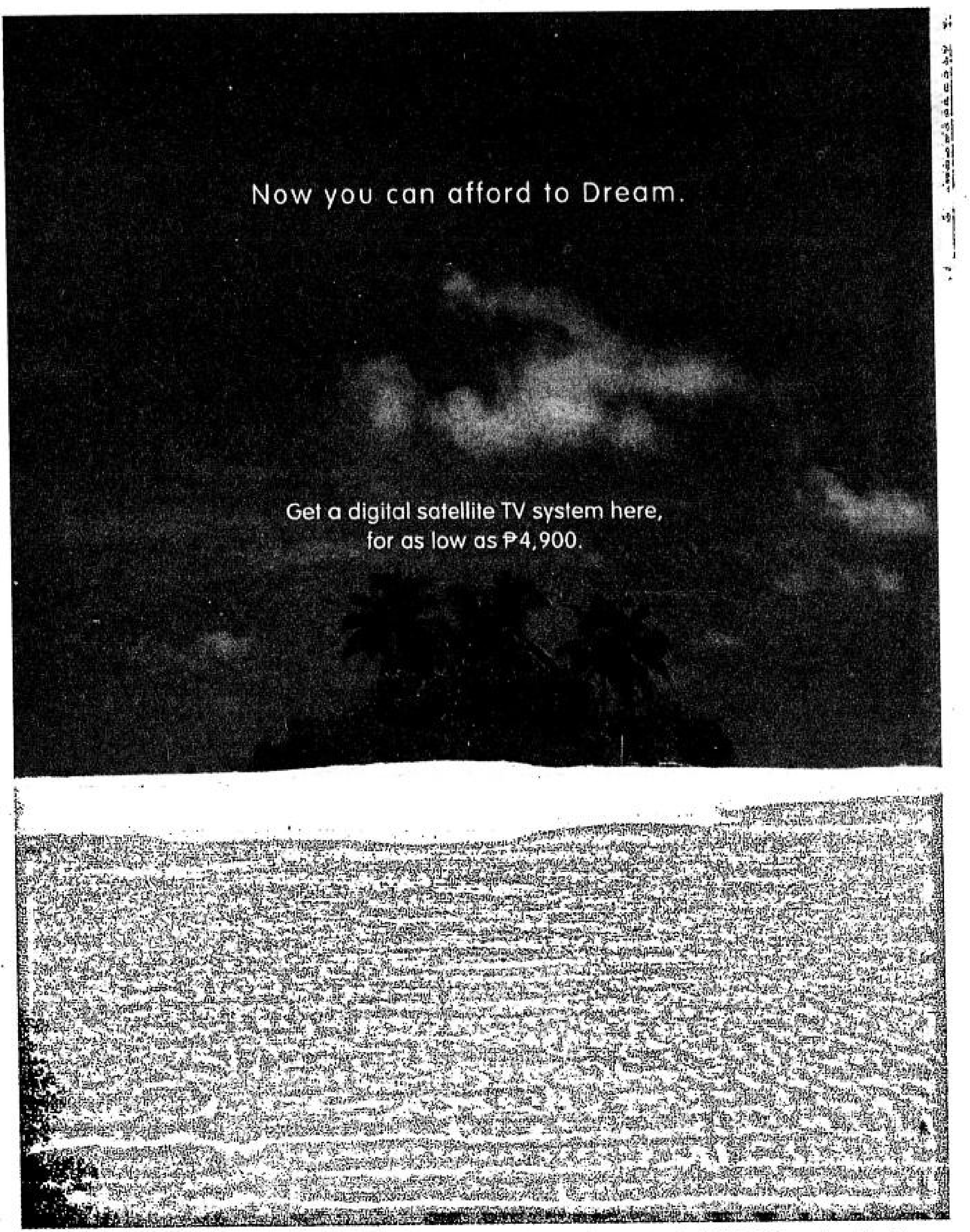
The two tricycle drivers, however, said they never knew that the gift contained a bomb.

Caligtan's 8-year-old daughter Marjorie Lovely was killed when she opened the package and the bomb exploded. Her father and two siblings, Sheila and Ryan, were seriously wounded.

Leopoldo, a former minister of the Pentecostal Church, and his two children are now being treated at the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in San Fernando City for second and third degree burns.

Acosta said the man asked him to deliver the package because it was getting dark. He said he initially refused the offer since he was going to Sta. Lucia but later agreed because, he said, he needed money to buy gasoline.

Despite their testimonies, Acosta and Jandoc are not yet off the hook, said Senior Insp. Fabiano Sudario Jr., Sta. Cruz police chief. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*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rom page A1

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RP business: Good, says Palace; bad, says survey

From page A1

ment site in Southeast Asia.

Sixty-five percent of those polled said doing business in the Philippines this year was worse than last year, while only 20 percent said it was somewhat better or much better, according to results of the Wallace Business Forum's 2002 Corporate Performance Survey released on Tuesday.

The Philippines ranked eighth out of 12 Asian countries mentioned by the 49 business executives polled in August. China was "the hands-down choice" as an investment location in Asia, with Thailand placing second, Malaysia third and South Korea fourth.

"Look at the figures . . . There are increases in foreign investments," Tiglao said when asked to comment on the survey results.

"We're not saying that the economy is booming . . . (but) the economy is on track," he added.

Businesses may not be pulling out. But Peter Wallace, who runs a business consultancy in Manila, said he knew of companies that had canceled sales conferences or other business trips to the Philippines because of safety fears.

"Almost two-thirds of the companies said the Philippines was worse compared to the rest of the Asean (Association of South East Asian Nations) as an investment site—a notoriety topped only by the 1993 survey when the country suffered eight-to-10-hour power blackouts," the Forum said.

"Being near the bottom of the list of priority investment location, it comes as no surprise that foreign direct investments are down to a trickle in the Philippines."

Only 24 percent of respondents said their head offices were supportive of existing operations here, while 69 percent said they were not ready to put in more money.

Worrying trend

It was the worst score in the history of the annual survey and a "very worrying trend," according to Wallace.

No Asian country can afford to see foreign direct investment shrivel, but the Philippines' need is particularly acute. Its investment rate lags behind its neighbors' and is a major reason for the country's history of economic underperformance.

Investment in the Philippines between 1991 and 2001 averaged 20.7 percent of gross domestic product, compared with 25.4 percent in Indonesia and 34.6 percent in Malaysia, according to Morgan Stanley. Deutsche Bank expects foreign direct investment this year to total just $300 million, down from $1.9 billion in 2001 and $2.1 billion in 2000.

The Philippines may still be attracting some foreign investment, but it's not enough. Some reasons discouraging investments, such as corruption and poor infrastructure, are as old as the hills. But the biggest deterrent nowadays is a very modern concern—security.

"The security issue is the single-biggest issue the government must overcome if it is to get foreign investors strongly interested again in coming to the Philippines," said Peter Wallace, who runs a business consultancy in Manila.

Even before last month's deadly bombings on the Indonesian island of Bali cast a shadow over Southeast Asia, well-publicized kidnappings and rebel insurgencies had led several governments to warn their citizens about the risks of traveling or working in the Philippines. The government is fighting communist guerrillas, Moro separatists and Abu Sayyaf bandits, which have been linked to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

"All of this leads to a sense of fear, a sense of concern about investment," Wallace said.

To improve the investment climate, the respondents said the government must eliminate corruption, improve peace and order and security, continue with its systems of incentives, and maintain consistency in policy.

Doing all it can

Tiglao said the Macapagal administration was doing all it could to address these concerns of foreign investors.

While prospective investors are getting cold feet, established foreign businesses seem to be taking the latest dangers very much in their stride.

Efren Samonte, commercial director of the Philippine unit of Unilever, said law-and-order concerns would not prevent the Anglo-Dutch consumer goods giant from continuing to invest in a country where it set up shop 75 years ago.

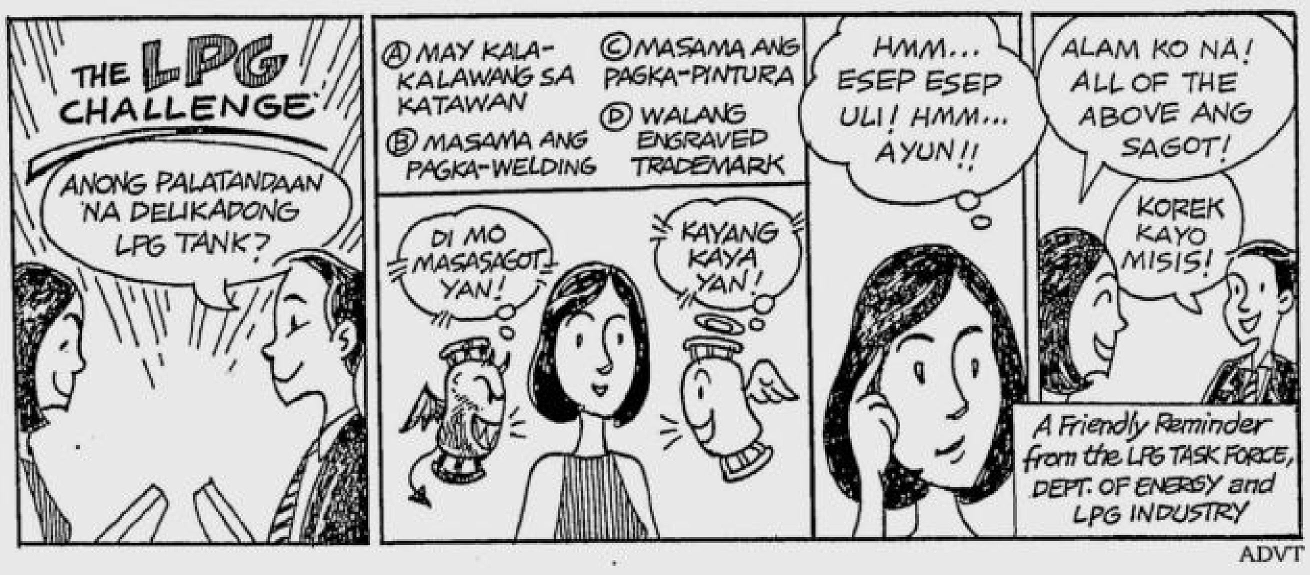
"We are in for the long haul and we intend to survive for another 75 years. There has been no change in the way we in Unilever look at the Philippines as an area for growth," he said. "We've seen ups and downs but we manage and we will continue to manage despite all the odds."

Several businessmen said the reality on the ground was at odds with what they described as excited media reporting.

But Michael Alan Hamlin, who runs a strategic marketing firm in Manila, said the perception that the Philippines was on the frontline of the US-led war against terror had at the very least created a serious image problem.

"The country has been advertised as a haven for terrorists and because the Philippines spends so little money promoting itself, that's the only message that people get," Hamlin said.

Even if the Philippines could wave a magic wand to make its streets safe and banish the risk of terror attacks, it would still face a huge obstacle to attracting more foreign direct investments. China is expected to grab around $50 billion in FDI this year alone, perhaps 10 times more than all of Southeast Asia. *With report from Reuters*


THE LPG CHALLENGE
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Ⓑ MASAMA ANG PAGKA-WELDING
Ⓒ MASAMA ANG PAGKA-PINTURA
Ⓓ WALANG ENGRAVED TRADEMARK
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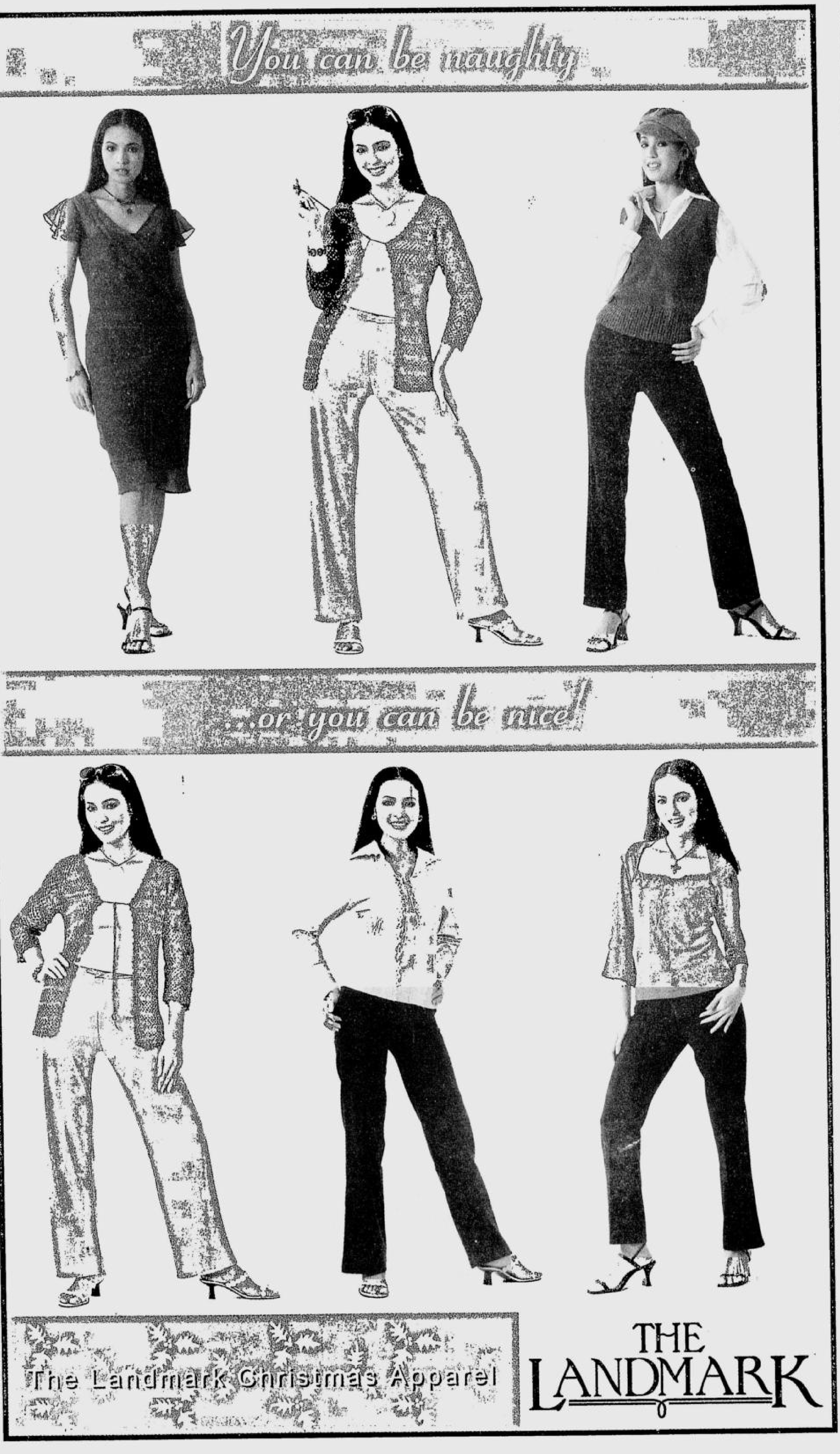

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OPINION

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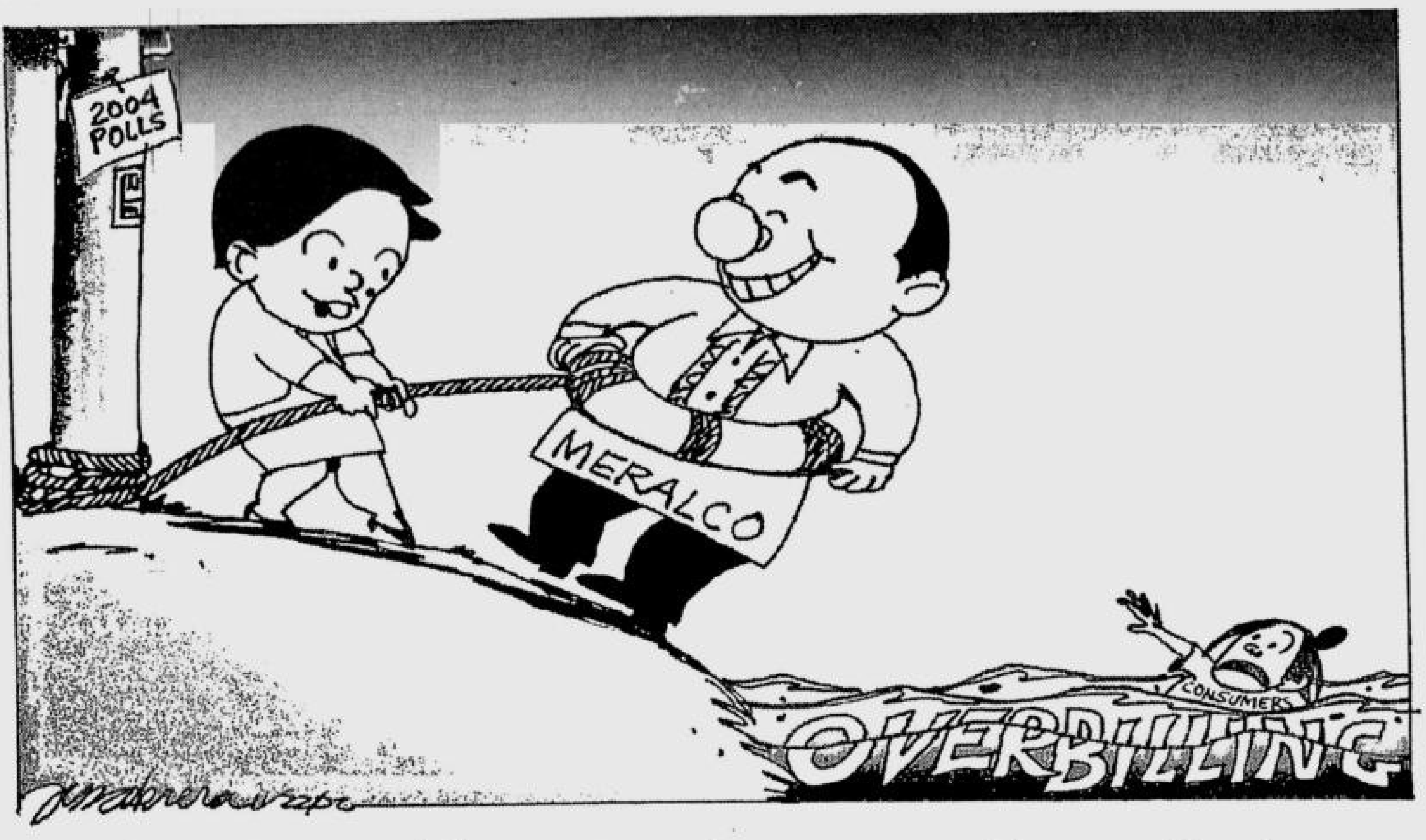

Lacson for president?

EDITORIAL

SEN. Panfilo Lacson is the first politician to announce formally his candidacy for the presidency in 2004. Unable to contain his Gothic ambition, Lacson announced his bid before he could even warm his seat in the Senate and establish a respectable record as a legislator, instead of just being the magnet for Senate investigations.

Lacson jumped the gun on even President Macapagal-Arroyo, who so far has been widely perceived to be already deeply engaged in electioneering but has not formally declared, and on a few others who have not disguised their presidential aspirations, including former Education Secretary Raul Roco and Sen. Edgardo Angara.

Apparently, Lacson made the announcement to preempt space ahead of prospective rivals. His decision makes the political pot boil rather prematurely. Having done so, Lacson can no longer take the President to task for early electioneering. That's one issue less for the President to contend with.

The prospects of Lacson winning the nomination as the opposition standard-bearer are far from certain. His first problem is how to grab it from Angara. Lacson and Angara have been locked in a struggle to capture the heart and the ideology of the opposition as early as the first few weeks of their election in May 2001 . The intensity of their rivalry has been masked by a façade of false unity.

Lacson's announcement is sure to crack this façade wide open and polarize the opposition into two irreconcilable tendencies, with Angara representing moderation, compromise and consensus-building, and Lacson representing the draconian side of "law and order" and strongman rule.

These differences have emerged in the positions taken by both Angara and Lacson on the stand-offs that have frequently paralyzed the Senate. Thus, before Lacson could even say that the opposition parties have agreed to unite and put up a common candidate, the opposition has to resolve this deep policy cleavage. If Lacson's tendency triumphs in a "united opposition," then the issues on which it would declare to provide a contrast and alternative to President Macapagal are quite clear: they would be centered on law and order.

Lacson is not known for his economic expertise (with economics being the key issue in 2004) and is best remembered for his involvement in the Kuratong Baleleng massacre and the well-documented association with the tortures and human rights atrocities of military special squads of the Marcos dictatorship. By declaring early, Lacson has set himself up for an early revival of these issues as well as the issues raised against him during the Senate hearings on money laundering and drug trafficking.

One can be sure that if ever the opposition unites behind him as its standard-bearer, Angara won't be his running mate. Angara learned his lesson when he was defeated overwhelmingly in 1998 as Joseph Estrada's running mate by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Unless he is stupid, Angara won't play second fiddle again.

But before the opposition can present a solid front, one other issue has to be resolved: Under what party will Lacson run? Lacson is a member of PDP Laban, the political machine of Angara, which provided the political organization and muscle for Joseph Estrada's winning presidential campaign in 1998. Lacson is launching his presidential bid even without taking control of the party. We should therefore expect some blood-letting in the opposition, enough to weaken it before it can put up a standard-bearer.

One issue that Lacson has highlighted is the control of the population explosion through wider use of contraceptives. Population control is a valid issue and in raising it, Lacson not only challenges the Catholic Church, which is opposed to artificial methods of birth control, but also puts this issue on the public agenda.

By declaring early, Lacson put himself up front as a target for demolition. We are certain he is aware of this but he still took the risk. The administration presidential candidate, who cannot be anybody else but the President, and other potential candidates breaking away from the administration coalition will now have a reference point in their campaign strategies. And they will be watching out for the carnage inside the opposition groups.

Let the public enjoy Arroceros Forest Park

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

SO Sen. Panfilo Lacson is the early bird—or the early worm, depending on how you look at him. If he is the latter, who is the early bird who will eat him?

Seriously speaking, Lacson would be a formidable opponent in the 2004 presidential elections (next to FPJ of course, if he runs) even with the Kuratong Baleleng and other charges hanging over his head. He may not be popular with the anti-Erap groups, but for those who are fed up with the breakdown in law and order and the corrupt cops, he may be the tough cop, the Dirty Harry or the Wyatt Earp of the Philippines, who can beat the criminals in and out of the police force.

People still remember how Lacson was able to make the crooked cops who kept for their own use recovered stolen vehicles, return these vehicles to their owners. They had been doing this for years and all the previous PNP chiefs did not, or were not able, to make the rogue cops do the right thing. Lacson was also the PNP chief who was able to discipline the *kotong* cops (who are now active again) and to make policemen undergo fitness exercises and reduce the big bellies of many officers.

It may seem scary at times, but if Lacson can impose a similar discipline on the nation as a whole, then we can probably start on the road to peace and order. It may also seem like heresy, but people fed up with lawlessness are hankering for an autocratic leader of the likes of Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore.

Is Lacson that man?

* * *

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza's lust for the Arroceros Forest Park can be compared to the lust of a DOM for a young lass. Not content with putting up a parking building in Mehan Garden, he is again making noises about constructing buildings for teachers in the park as well as going ahead with an earlier plan to build the City College on what remains of Mehan.

It may be hard to understand why Atienza wants to do this until we delve into the psychological. Maybe Atienza is like Imelda Marcos or the rulers of the Middle Ages who have building binges so they would be remembered for the edifices they erect. If it is only that, Atienza has many places where he can build his schools and teachers' buildings.

For example, the big stretch of land beside the Pasig River, from the Arroceros Forest Park to the Gotesco condominium near Ayala Bridge, is owned by the city—and vacant. It is just a wasteland waiting to be developed. Atienza can construct his City College and teachers' offices there and nobody would complain. This place beside the river is more conducive to learning than being in the middle of the infernal traffic at Mehan Garden. This abandoned piece of valuable land would be put to good use instead of obliterating an existing park.

* * *

On the other hand, Winner Foundation, which developed and maintains the Arroceros Forest Park, seems to be very selfish. The park is closed to the public. What good is a park if the public cannot enjoy it? Commuters pass by the park every day and see the trees and wonder what is in it. They have never been inside it.

I have been there a couple of times and I can tell you it is really a beautiful and relaxing place, with the Pasig River flowing along one side and a magnificent view of the buildings across. It is the perfect place to meditate, relax, read, rest, take a nap, take lunch or a quick snack, or just feel the cool breeze, away from the dust, noise and heat of the hell that is the city.

But nobody gets to enjoy this little bit of heaven except the lone gardener of Winner Foundation. Perhaps finally realizing this (I told them once before to open it to the public), the foundation announced that it will open the park to the public twice a month. Twice a month! Big deal! Why only twice a month? Why be so selfish? It should be open for the public to enjoy. That is what a park is for.

Put up park benches and picnic tables and sell snacks so the foundation can earn a little money to maintain the park. Office workers from City Hall or from across the river can go there for lunch or snacks. Students from Intramuros (or from Atienza's City College nearby) can go there to study their lessons or just relax. Shoppers from SM mall or church-goers from Quiapo can go there for a change of scenery. And when there is a show at the nearby Metropolitan Theater, the park is the perfect place for refreshments during intermission. Put up lights and a small pond with ducks and geese, and not even Atienza will have the heart to close it.

Besides, if the public has been using and enjoying the park, the public itself will protest if the mayor tries to close it or to put it to another use. But right now, Winner Foundation can hardly get any sympathy from the public in its fight against Atienza's wood-cutters. The public doesn't even know what it is going to miss once the trees are cut down.

The Arroceros Forest Park is indeed beautiful, useful and should be preserved—there's no doubt about that. But let the people see that and appreciate it. Don't keep them away from their park. It still belongs to them. That park, beautiful as it is, is being wasted.

The Arroceros Forest Park reminds me of that poem in high school, the last stanza of which goes like this:

Full many a flower
Is born to blush unseen
And waste its sweetness
In the desert air.

Blessings

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

MY thanks to Gilda Cordero-Fernando for her vote of confidence in her article last Sunday ("Filipino as superbeing: Filipinizing the world"). No, I have not lost faith in the Filipino notwithstanding the truly depressing circumstances we find ourselves in, more and more each day. A thing little helped by the contrast between the promise and fulfillment of Edsa. Edsa II promised glory. We got Gloria.

We do have much to be thankful for, amid the crime and grime. I will not bother to count the ways. I will cite only the least and most.

At the least, we are not naturally given to hatred and violence on grounds of religion and ethnic purity. That doesn't mean we are not a violent people. Kidnapping and murder are par for the course nowadays, as are political assassinations. The gunning down of an Abra mayor as he stood as sponsor at a wedding in a church in Laguna has upped the ante on electoral bloodletting. Well before that we had achieved incredible levels of electoral mayhem. Bingbong Crisologo burned two villages during one election before martial law, and the scale of murders during Marcos' campaign for reelection in 1969 rivaled, according to scholars, the scale of murders in Latin America during the period known as La Violencia.

But that kind of violence remains curable. It bursts like a storm and abates. Not so the deep-seated one that owes to religion and a desire for ethnic cleansing. The kind you have between Arab and Jew, Indian and Pakistani, Croat and Serb. At the height of Israel's siege of Yasser Arafat a couple of months ago, the Palestinian and Israeli leaders who appeared on CNN and BBC could barely control their anger. These were people who were used to facing audiences and being diplomatic, but facing each other (though never in the same room—that would have been mayhem), they registered profound hatred for each other. Yes, hatred. It was palpable, and it leaped out of the television screen.

We do harbor anti-Muslim and anti-Chinese sentiments, partly latent, partly active, but they are a very pale shadow of this. That at least is something to be thankful for in these days of diminished blessings.

At the most, we are a country that bursts with creativity. I am not at all surprised that we excel in music and the arts. Ear is the name, improvisation is the game. The Filipino has a fantastic *oido*, and his ability to use even adversity to his advantage is a thing to behold. This probably owes in no small way to the subtle ways he has developed to resist oppression.

One prime example is the way he transformed the *barong Tagalog* into the country's national costume. The origin of the *barong* was the transparent, or translucent, clothes the Americans ordered the Indios to wear to prevent them from hiding knives in their persons. This was so particularly after the Samar incident, where a group of Filipinos feigning a funeral procession sneaked into an American camp and decimated its ranks. Look what the Filipino has done to those clothes: he has turned them from an object of humiliation to one of national pride. That is cleverness, that is creativity, within the context of rebelliousness or a desire to be free. The Filipino hasn't just developed an instinct for self-preservation, he has developed an instinct for self-expression.

And look what he's done to the jeep, a plain-looking contraption the Americans used to ferry officials through rugged roads before and during the War. An object known only for its resolute utility, it has become a walking, or crawling, well, call it what you will. Some will call it "folk art," others will call it a monstrosity. It has enlarged on the scope of utility. It can now fit in more people than the original jeep. Just by how much you'll know if you've taken a jeepney in the province, which mushrooms with people on the entrance steps, at the back, and on the roof.

And it has turned into a gaudy display of the magical, demented, colorful, chaotic, fun-loving, incontinent Filipino spirit. The jeepney is basically an extension of the Filipino home, with its crucifixes, its Sto. Niños, its "God bless our home" signs, its posters of movie and rock stars, its paintings of mermaids and camels, its exclamations of "Katas ng Saudi," though the last seem less visible these days. Well, there is something there that's not an extension of the Filipino home, which are the stickers of women in various stages of undress and feline poses. No further comment there.

Unfortunately, there's a downside to all this. Which is that the Filipino also uses that creativity for the most horrendously counterproductive ends. That ear or capacity for improvisation also translates into being *wais, magulang, magaling magpalusot*. It translates into the ability, or obsession, to cut corners, to get around things, to skirt the normal way of doing things. Sometimes for no better reason than just to prove that it can be done. The lengths to which people try to get around things, using a variety of fixers, contacts, go-betweens, employing the most elaborate methods, from spurious medical documents to forged signatures, are breathtaking. And often stupid for the simple fact that they would probably have spent less and gotten things much faster by just falling in line.

I've always thought that if we used our monumental creativity thinking of ways to help our community rather than just our individual selves get ahead (you have got to be pissed off by cars behind you that take to your left when you and everybody else are waiting your turn before a traffic light), we'd have gone farther than our neighbors by now. What makes us not do so?

Well, that's another story, or column. Maybe for tomorrow. I'll just play it by ear.

* * *

This column was interchanged with the one that appeared yesterday. My apologies.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Consumers prefer common stocks with voting rights

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

MERALCO is disputing the Energy Regulatory Commission's computation of the amount it owes the public in excess billings. The Supreme Court, backing the ERC, has ordered the refund to the public of P28.15 billion, but by Meralco's computation this comes up to only about P8 billion. The difference in computation seems to stem from the fact that Meralco based its computation on the argument that the ERC, which had questioned the excess billings, departed from the old formula Meralco has been following since the 1970s in calculating its rate base. In its computations over the years, Meralco has considered its income tax as operating expense, an industry practice allowed even in the United States, which the old Energy Regulatory Board had permitted. Now, says Meralco, the new ERC changed its mind in a span of nine months.

* * *

This issue of whether income tax is part of operating expenses or not will be debated and challenged, for on this will depend the computation of excess billings. For the moment, however, there is more concern in some sectors of the consuming public about how to get their refund, without letting Meralco go completely under. The firm has maintained that forcing it to refund the staggering amount ordered by the SC would affect its financial structure, and the public definitely does not want to go back to the dark days.

* * *

Taken in this light, some observers opine that the refund should not be in the form of discounts in monthly billings over eight years, which is not acceptable, but in common stocks with voting rights priced at current stock market prices. They argue that once Meralco's customers receive their stocks, they can then sell them in the stock market if they so wish, and the cash generated can be used to buy consumer goods, thereby helping to stimulate the economy. Observers feel that common stocks without voting rights won't be attractive, and they point to PLDT's preferred stocks as proof.

Concerned citizens also assert that one way to protect the Meralco customers is to make it easier for an outsider to join the firm's board as fiscalizer. In fact, they feel that the customers can form an association to enable them to elect even two reputable people to the board.

* * *

I was so sure it was former Sen. Francisco "Kit" Tatad, whom I waved to in the big crowd at the birthday party-cum-political launch of former Sen. Raul Roco in his Antipolo farm last month, and I mentioned in my write-up that Kit was the only opposition leader there. But now he writes to say that he couldn't have been in Antipolo since he was in Canada. A sharp vision has been among my blessings from God, but either it failed me that time or Kit has a fantastic double. I checked this out with another friend who was there, Today columnist Raul Contreras, and he said Kit was not there. My apologies to Kit.

* * *

Happily, the Ateneo de Manila University will continue this Saturday, Nov. 23, the beautiful tradition begun in December 1969 by then Ateneo president Fr. Pacifico A. Ortiz, S.J., of honoring Ateneans who have put their lives on the line for their country during crucial periods in its history. Heaven knows how a presentation of heroes for emulation, especially by the youth, is something so badly needed in these times.

In 1969, Father Ortiz (whom I had the privilege of working for in the early 1960s when he was regent of the Ateneo Law School), President Quezon's chaplain who subsequently became the first chaplain of the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, installed a modest Ateneo War Memorial marker for those who fought in the Philippine Revolution of 1896 and World War II. Inscribed in that memorial was the second stanza of Jose Rizal's immortal poem, "Mi Ultimo Adios," and the names of the first honorees: "Boy General" Gregorio del Pilar, Cesar Basa, Manuel Colayco (hero of the Battle of Manila during World War II) and Ramon Cabrera.

* * *

In subsequent years, Ateneo alumni who staked their lives defying the dictatorship of Marcos, such as Ninoy Aquino and Evelio Javier, were also honored by their alma mater. Today the honored alumni number 102. This Saturday's 12 new honorees include three members of the faculty in pre-war Ateneo: public servant Benito Soliven (father of journalist Max Soliven), one of the founders of the Ateneo Law School; Fr. Joseph Mulry, S.J., professor of English and Literature who championed the cause of social justice, and Ateneo cadet corps commandant Col. Roger Hilsman Sr. The others are former Comelec Commissioner Ramon Felipe Jr., Aristeo Feraren, Cristobal Hofilena, Venicio Jalandoni, Emmanuel Lacaba, Simeon Rene Lacson, Jose Monfort, Nick Solana and Miguel Ver.

* * *

The whole-day program is being organized by the Ateneo Heroes Committee headed by Dr. Fernando Hofilena, under the auspices of the Office of Planning and Development and Alumni Affairs, headed by Fr. Carmelo Caluag. It will feature an exhibit at the new Church of the Gesu plaza and show, among others, a TV documentary on the Battle of Bataan and an offering of the Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor and the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office, with military historian Dr. Ricardo Jose giving a commentary. After the 3 p.m. concelebrated Mass at the Gesu led by Ateneo president Bienvenido Nebres, who serves as Defenders chaplain, the relocated Ateneo Heroes marker will be blessed. This will be followed by wreath-laying, a 21-gun salute and Taps. At the Bellarmine Field, Father Nebres will present the medallions to the honorees or their kin, and address the gathering. The response will be made by writer Pete Lacaba, brother of Eman Lacaba.

Midwives of substance

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT was the last night of the first national assembly of the Well-Family Midwife Clinics (WFMC). Before this, the more than 200 midwife-entrepreneurs, gathering for a two-day meet at the Cebu Plaza Hotel, had listened to speakers, including Sen. Juan Flavier, extolling the work they were doing in promoting maternal and child health while updating their skills in both caring for mothers and children and running their own businesses.

But tonight, all the talking was over and it was time for the midwives to rock! Any thoughts about the gathering ending on a sober note were dispelled once the program began. The first group put on a "traditional" number of folk dances, though there was a moment of excitement when the kerchief of one of the "Pandanggo sa Ilaw" dancers caught fire and the midwife demonstrated remarkable presence of mind by blowing out the flames, all the while keeping in step with the music. "That's what we midwives are all about!" an admiring colleague commented.

By the time the Western Visayas contingent strolled onstage in the dazzling costumes of the "Masskara" Festival then strutted their stuff to the disco classic "It's Raining Men," the entire ballroom was in an uproar. Spirits soared further when the Metro Manila group came up with their "Hagibis" number, complete with a "sexy dancer" whose moves were so polished, we wondered if the Well-Family network wasn't also into talent management.

The evening's entertainment closed with an elaborate and even moving paean to the environment mounted by the Davao delegation, dressed in ethnic costumes that, we quipped, must have entailed emptying the entire Aldevinco complex of t'nalak cloth.

If the midwives had wanted to demonstrate their organizational capability, as well as their individual drive and creativity, they couldn't have chosen a better showcase.

* * *

BUT really, they have more to show off than just their performing skills. In the five years or so that the Well-Family Midwife Clinics have existed, the women have shown that midwives, long considered mere "handmaids" to other health professionals like doctors and nurses, may well be the secret to the efficient delivery of quality health services at the barangay or village level.

In 1997, determined to expand private sector participation in the delivery of health services, but especially family planning, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and JSI/RTI launched a network of midwife-owned and operated clinics that would provide "affordable quality family planning and maternal and child health services in key urban areas and selected municipalities in the country." In partnership with 10 non-government organizations around the country, the Well-Family Midwife Clinics recruited and trained midwives from all over the country, transforming them from second-tier health professionals into health management entrepreneurs, owning and running their clinics for profit and public service.

"We used to be referred to as '*comadrona lang* (just midwives)'," recalls Carol Millan, whose clinic in Barangay Rizal in Makati is so profitable she has two doctors in her staff. "Today, we're seen as professionals, and sometimes, our clients even refer to us as doctors."

* * *

WITH TWO years of training and licensed by the government, midwives used to be thought of as good only for delivering babies into the world and caring for them in their first hours of life. Indeed, having a licensed midwife as a nursemaid for one's children is still seen as a status symbol among upper-class and aspiring-for-upper-class women.

It's true also that the two-year midwifery course was, and still is, seen as a means of securing a much-coveted job abroad as a domestic, nurse's aide or, increasingly, caregiver.

But the midwife-entrepreneurs of the Well-Family network are working to ensure that public perception of their profession expands beyond such narrow definitions. "We are frontliners in our communities, we play so many roles," explains Joy Mora-Plaza from Surigao City. "We are also teachers, surrogate parents, counselors and even sanitation officers."

And sex counselors? I teasingly probe. The women around the table break out into raucous laughter. "I think the women and even the men trust us because we seem to be more approachable and open than doctors," remarks Marites Agote-Cinco of Tacloban. "Husbands feel free to ask us if it is safe to have sex while their wives are pregnant, while wives can open up to us about problems like vaginal dryness."

* * *

NOT every midwife can qualify as a Well-Family midwife. Many of those who opened the first clinics were recruited from government hospitals or health centers. To qualify, one must undergo hours of rigorous training in quality care standards, as well as in running a business. Most of the midwives I talked with agreed that the business part—preparing feasibility studies, reading profit-and-loss statements, maintaining account books, marketing their services—was the more difficult phase of the training.

And even after they're accredited, the Well-Family midwives and their clinics are constantly monitored (by the partner NGOs) and evaluated, such that some clinics have, through the years, been closed down and deregistered. Every clinic must also adhere to Department of Health guidelines and standards.

These high standards and assurance of quality are what set apart the Well-Family Midwife Clinics from similar providers. "This is our distinction," declares Carol. "Our 'brand name' is what separates us from others."

(More tomorrow)

Fallout from the Jasmine debacle

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

I EXPECTED to receive reactions from the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) on the views expressed in this space last week.

Dr. Emil Q. Javier, chair of the CGIAR technical advisory committee, wrote to say that what I wrote was based on limited information on the nature of CGIAR and that it was incorrect to say that CGIAR has been neglectful in protecting the rights of ownership and access of the developing countries to global plant genetic resources.

Ruaraidh Sackville Hamilton, head of IRRI's Genetic Resources Center, also wrote to say that had I checked their website, I would not have written that "IRRI has denied involvement" in Thailand's Jasmine rice material getting into the hands of those who wanted to get a patent on it. In fact, he said, "(IRRI has) publicly confirmed our direct involvement in the sharing of the variety involved." Ah, so.

I agree with CGIAR and IRRI officials when they say that IRRI's gene bank is important for humankind, what with the 106,000 accessions of cultivated and wild rices (yes, scientists say rices) stored there. But we should not forget that the "highly scientific operation" of IRRI is really the compilation and continuation of the work of generations of farming communities, among them, indigenous groups. This is their legacy, a heritage that should be conserved, not stolen for profit.

Now, multinational agri-giant Syngenta has found its way into CGIAR as a new member. Horrors. This was partly the reason CGIAR's NGO committee made an outcry and many put their involvement on freeze.

CGIAR's research centers all over the world, which includes IRRI, cannot deny that there have been problems in the gene banks' management in relation to policy perspectives. Materials have been distributed without the appropriate transfer agreement. Companies and foreign scientists have been caught with their hands in the cookie jar, applying for intellectual property rights on the seeds directly taken from the gene bank. While this may not have been condoned, this could be called neglect.

The Jasmine rice debacle shows why. In 1995, germplasm from IRRI got into the hands of a US breeder without the material transfer agreement (MTA). This guy wanted to develop new strains that could be grown in the United States. An MTA was eventually signed—six years after. I understand a benefit-sharing contract with the Thai government has not been signed.

What happened to IRRI's mandate of helping the farmers of the developing world? If the small Thai Jasmine rice producers lose their huge market in the United States, what happens?

IRRI's Hamilton wrote and argued that "while American scientists may have the expertise to produce a similar Jasmine rice variety, they can never hope to copy the unique soil, climatic, cultural and environmental conditions of Thailand to produce real jasmine rice." What if they found such a place?

The Jasmine rice case was not the only one. There was an attempt in 1997 by Australian groups to patent chickpea varieties obtained from one of the CGIAR institutions, the International Center for Research in the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). Generations of Indian peasants had developed the varieties kept at ICRISAT. Then "researchers" got their hands on them and wanted a patent on them. Vigilant NGOs blocked the attempt.

Javier described the NGOs and "civil society entities (as) puny compared with the long sustained efforts at biodiversity conservation of CGIAR" but he did say their efforts are commendable.

Someone just wrote to say that "games of words do not help protect the seeds. One example is the slippery phrase 'in the form received.' The policy climate that CGIAR works in is that the materials shipped out of the gene banks cannot be patented 'in the form received.' This is supposedly meant to protect the seeds from being patented and exploited for profit. But they only state that the seeds should not be patented in their original form."

So if someone takes a variety from IRRI's seed bank and makes a small modification, who is to stop this person from getting a patent on their modified variety? Now, if the patent is eventually lodged in the seed's country of origin, the farmers there would be barred from saving the seeds of this new variety. They will have to buy!

The point in the ongoing debate is bigger than who stole or allowed the stealing of the cookie in the cookie jar. The point is that there should be no form of intellectual property rights on life whatsoever. Life is not a commodity. Generations of farmers over thousands of years passed on these seeds. Patenting these seeds, and new varieties developed, should not be allowed. And this should apply to all forms of life.

Now on the Mexican corn. Okay, there has been no suggestion that CIMMYT, IRRI's counterpart on maize and wheat in Mexico, was directly at fault for contamination of a corn variety or that this happened right in the gene bank. The fact is, despite the Mexican government's protests for several months, there was silence. Was Nature magazine really "embarrassed" that it came out with the revelation? How was damage control in the media done? It's more complicated than you think.

On my desk is a stack of papers that came via e-mail. They are all about seeds and life and the uproar. As I end this, I swivel and rock my big computer chair and remember the poem we, as kids, had to memorize, recite and act out (with fear and trembling) before the class: *"In the heart of a seed, very deep, so deep/ A dear little plant lay fast asleep..."* Verydeepsodeep, at that time, sounded like one word to me.

* * *

Comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Trial by fire

YOUNG BLOOD

Maria Stephanie R. Jardleza, M.D.

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I UNDERWENT my first surgery when I was two days old. I have had a few more over the years, some out of real necessity, others for "fine tuning." Thus, my life became inextricably bound to my physicians.

When I look in the mirror, I see an example of why we can never be God: crooked teeth, a slightly off-center smile, a few faint scars. But that's just the small picture. I also see the gift that my surgeons have chosen to share with me: their talent, their time, their selflessness, their desire to make people whole. This is the reason I chose to become a doctor: to share and pass on the gift of healing.

I don't pretend to know the intricacies of the Medical Malpractice Bill. When it first came to be discussed publicly, I was busy putting the finishing touches on my internship and studying for the board examinations. What hits me hard is how, over the past few months, this bill and all its proponents, whether politicians or media personalities, vilify us and shame us in the eyes of the same people we have chosen to serve. To think, that the people who are trying to control our practice and dictate to us through this bill seem not to have any idea what it takes to be a doctor.

The practice of medicine is a life-long endeavor. My affair with medicine did not begin and end in my surgeons' offices. It continued at home as I looked at my father pulling out a book after an exhausting day at the clinic to review for the next day's cataract surgery, even though he had done it countless times before. It thrived on my grandfather's stories about how, as a medical intern, he continued to report for duty to the Philippine General Hospital even while it was being shelled by the Japanese army. I knew even before I began my medical studies that I was not getting into a nine-to-five job for which I could study half-heartedly while I was in college. It was something that required a lifetime of dedication and pursuit of excellence.

It's impossible to put a price on the sacrifices my colleagues and I have made and continue to make in the long haul to become physicians. It is vulgar to suggest that all we seek to do in this world is make money from our patients, as one defender of the bill so crudely put it during a televised debate. If somebody offered to pay you P250 or even P10,000, would you go sleepless for 30 hours straight, sometimes taking only one meal a day, every three days, expose yourself to people with HIV or warped strains of tuberculosis that no man-made drug can cure, and then try more than your hardest to make them better, anyway?

We give up the best and some of the most productive years of our lives studying and training for this profession. In the process some of us get terribly ill, miscarry our babies or postpone starting our own families. No amount of money can make up for all of that. Before anyone calls us cash-hungry and people-killing demons, he ought to remember that we willingly choose to go through these risks so that we can serve and provide medical care to others.

I have never looked at my patients as enemies I had to defend myself from. Sometimes I fail to see the logic behind rushing babies with one-month-old drippy noses to the emergency room at 2 a.m., but I've never hated the mothers because of this.

But the Medical Malpractice Bill forces me to look at my future practice in a new and very unpleasant light. I looked at my last patient as someone I could freely extend help to, someone I wanted very much to get out of the hospital healthy and well. I hope I will never have to see my next patient as a potentially malignant monster who might ruin my career on account of money.

Much as some people would like to believe that we physicians protect each other's nether regions when we make mistakes, they are terribly wrong. Our harshest critics are our colleagues and ultimately our own selves. Day after day for many years during our training, we are forced to defend our medical decisions and listen as they are mercilessly dissected, criticized and corrected by our senior colleagues. And hardly a day passes when we don't hit our heads over the patients we weren't able to send home.

The process of becoming a physician is a trial by fire. It doesn't end after we finish medical school, pass the board examinations or complete our subspecialty training. When I chose to go into medicine, I knew that every day of the rest of my life would be spent being burned and prodded to try harder, do better, learn more. So, as I start my medical career, please don't threaten to throw me in jail, drain my non-existent savings and take it all away just because I am human.

Maria Stephanie R. Jardleza, M.D., 25, finished medicine cum laude at the University of the Philippines.

THEY SAID

Saving time

"It saves time, and the President's time is an important commodity."

—Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao on the President's doing away with departure and arrival speeches

Not for shallow reasons

"We are not so shallow as to stage a coup just because our salaries are delayed. Give us the benefit of the doubt."

—Col. Cesar de la Peña of the Philippine Marines

Not monetary reasons

"We were with her in her moments of deprivation precisely because we did not expect to be paid."

—Rita Gaddi, former Marcos loyalist rebuking Imelda Marcos who said the loyalists turned against her since they have yet to be compensated

The INQUIRER is a member of the
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The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

Opposition to US aggression

"Mas resistencia, mas esperanza."
—From flyers sent out by the Katipunan during the Philippine-American War, circa 1899

WE are educators, teachers and scholars of Filipino descent in the Philippines, the United States and the world, who strongly oppose any US preemptive military aggression or support for such aggression against Iraq or against any other country. We believe that the false evidence that the US president has peddled regarding Iraq's imminent threat to the United States, together with the US government's and media's manipulation of the American public's grief over last year's 9/11 tragedy, mask a deceptive and undemocratic campaign to coerce the American people and the peoples of the world into accepting the unlawful and unwarranted US invasion of other countries. We further note that US taxpayers are being forced to divert the money originally allocated to health care, education and social security to the indiscriminate bombing of civilian populations and the anticipated economic exploitation of Iraq by US oil companies and big business.

We speak as the sons and daughters of a nation systematically decimated and brutalized by US imperialism since the turn of the 20th century—first, through the decimation of one-tenth of the Philippine population through murder and concentration camps; and later, through the active promotion of economic underdevelopment and political corruption at the highest levels of Philippine government. As witnesses to the recent return of US military troops and stations to the Philippines and as concerned respondents to the mounting tension between the Philippine government and various groups branded by the United States as "terrorist," we denounce the escalation of violence in the Philippines as a direct consequence of the US war campaign against the Arab peoples. While the stain of prostitution, environmental pollution and economic exploitation spread by the US military bases in the Philippines has become our legacy of colonial subjection, we join our hands and hearts in an unequivocal opposition and resistance to US unilateralism and its self-proclaimed right to violence—in Iraq, in the Philippines and in every part of the world.

**—WITH 65 SIGNATORIES,
Filipino Convenors
and Signatories of the Anti-War
Statement**

LETTERS

In nobody's pocket

I WISH to clarify that the president of the Institute of Corporate Directors, Jesus P. Estanislao, currently has no business connections with any of the companies of Emilio Yap.

Estanislao writes a column, three times a week, in the Bulletin Today. He receives a token honorarium for doing so, and this hardly puts him in "in the pocket" of Yap.

The Institute of Corporate Directors is not in any way dependent on any business group or industry association. It works with all business groups and industry associations on corporate governance reforms.

**—GIL GONZALES, head of
administration, The Institute of
Corporate Directors, Sayoc Bldg.
100, 93 Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City**

Where can one park legally on Madison Street?

ABOUT two weeks ago, I sent my driver to the Globe office building on Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City, to have my cell phone fixed. After going around the basement three times, he could not find a parking space, so he went around Madison for about 30 minutes until he saw a car leaving. He took the car's place on the street.

When he got to the Globe office, he was asked if he had a problem parking and he said yes. They asked him where he parked and he said on Madison.

When my driver got out of the Globe building, my car and another car were being towed away. But the other cars were still there.

When my driver asked around, he was told by other drivers that that area was a "favorite spot" of the tow-away specialists. So he went to retrieve my car and paid the P1,200 fine.

Recently, I sent my driver to pick up my cell phone. He again parked on Madison Street, in a different area where a sign said: "PARK ON THIS SIDE." But when he came back after getting my cell phone, the car was gone again!

I hope that Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos will read this letter and let the public know exactly where the tow-away zones in the city are so that I and other Globe customers would know whether to just commute instead of ending up paying P1,200 for every visit to Globe's office.

**—TESS GONZAGA,
7350 San Maximo St.,
Makati City**

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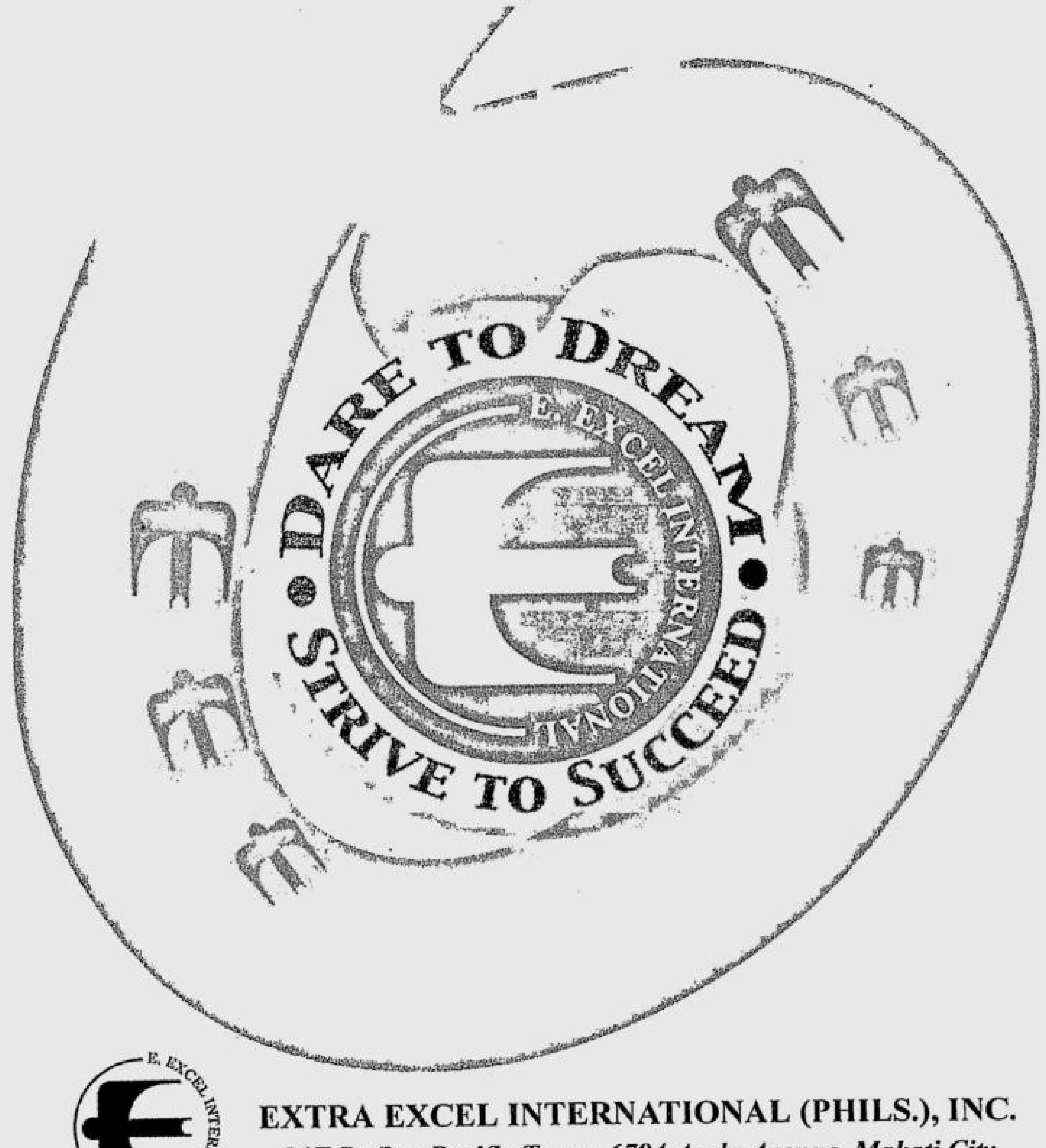

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Ring tones as social capital

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE BUZZWORD these days in development jargon is "social capital," which is now touted by such agencies as the World Bank as an important key to development.

The term dates back to the 1970s, used by anthropologists and sociologists to refer to the social networks as well as norms of obligation and trust. The idea here is that it takes more than financial capital to move a community forward. People need to be convinced to work together, and to pool together knowledge and skills. Without this, all the monetary capital in the world will not be very useful.

My favorite definition of social capital comes from two South African researchers, Tony Barnett and Alan Whiteside, who offer this succinct description: "stored trust, understanding and information."

I'm particularly interested in this idea of "stored information." One can imagine a community, or even an entire nation, having a kind of data bank of knowledge and skills which grows with time. All societies have this, but the ways of transmitting this accumulated knowledge will vary, ranging from proverbs and riddles to books and, today, compact discs.

Preserving—and transmitting—knowledge is important because it saves on having to reinvent the wheel. Instead of starting from scratch, you pick up from where previous generations left off, to improve and expand.

The indigenous portions of this social capital are especially important because you have knowledge that evolved in response to local conditions and may therefore be the more appropriate for solving problems.

This is where I have fears about the Philippines. We are already handicapped, compared to many other Asian countries, by having a fairly short history as "the Philippines" and as "Filipinos." Our oldest churches, for example, are less than 400 years. In China, a 400-year-old temple would be considered "new" since "old" means a thousand years or so.

There's also a very more conscious effort, among many other Asian countries, to transmit and accumulate social capital. I once had a tour guide who proudly told me her 4-year-old son, who had only started nursery, could recite poems from the Tang dynasty, which goes back a thousand years. This is not surprising. Go into a Chinese bookstore and you will find shelf after shelf of very old books in all kinds of adaptations, including comic-book versions for very young children. Older Chinese, who memorized the poems in their childhood, get the next generation off to an early start by reciting these poems much like they would sing a lullaby.

I don't see enough of that here. We have children's books certainly, and outfits like Aklat Adarna do a good job in weaving in local folk tales. But we need a more sustained effort to propagate older traditions.

This is not a matter of nostalgia. Having links to the past makes us appreciate ourselves more, and helps to wean us from our overdependence on America and the West. Just look at the use of medicinal plants as an example. We buy up all kinds of imported "natural products" but fail to develop our own, because there hasn't been enough interest in documenting and developing local plants, or traditional medicine in general.

There are so many channels for accumulating social capital. I know this will sound almost strange, but even ring tones can be one such venue. Look at Globe and Smart's available ring tones for download and you'll find everything from the Beatles to Eminem—everything foreign, that is. There are a few contemporary Filipino tunes but none of the older Filipino songs. A few months back, when Lucio San Pedro passed away, I realized you couldn't get his "Ugoy sa Duyan" as a ring tone. No wonder one TV commentator, attempting a eulogy to this great composer, referred to his piece as "Unggoy sa Duyan."

I checked around at UP and found a musical score for the song, and then converted the notes into a ring tone. Since then I've shared it with friends, usually people who hear my phone ringing and recognize the tune. That recognition is at least a consolation. Even more encouraging is that some of them tell me their teenage children have also requested the ring tone.

I'd like to think that's one way of contributing to social capital, not so much a bunch of musical notes than a sense of pride in our own culture. Note, too, that there's a political angle to "Ugoy"—if people ask, you should explain it was composed during the Japanese occupation, the plaintive lullaby-like tune being a metaphor for a nation in distress.

There are many other examples of lost opportunities for passing on social capital. I particularly like the way Indonesians tap older terms to describe modern technologies. A phone booth is a "wartel." If you're looking for an Internet café, look for "warnet." The terms are hybrids: *warung telefon* and *warung Internet*, *warung* being the equivalent of our *kubo* or hut.

Last year, taking one of their commuter trains, I was intrigued by vendors hawking, "*sarong remote, sarong remote.*" No one seemed to be peddling the cloth wraparounds one associates with *sarong*. It turned out a *sarong remote* was a case for the remote control unit. I presume they now have *sarong mobile.*

Indonesia's phone cards come in a wide variety, most of which are colorful designs adapted from Indonesian arts and crafts. In contrast, Philippine phone cards feature basketball players, movie stars, Winnie the Pooh or, worse, drab company logos.

Our much-touted artistic flair is, unfortunately, mainly imitative, and this lack of originality spills over into our political culture and our economic system. We consume or ape other societies' creations and stifle local initiatives. Building social capital is not a matter of stagnating and living in the past. It's harnessing the creativity and imagination of past generations so we can catapult ourselves into an exciting future.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Ecological disaster feared

LA CORUNA, Spain—Spain braced for further possible environmental destruction on Wednesday, a day after an oil tanker broke in two and sank off the coast.

The Prestige was carrying twice as much fuel than the Exxon Valdez which ran aground in Alaska in 1989, creating what was then thought to be the world's worst oil spill.

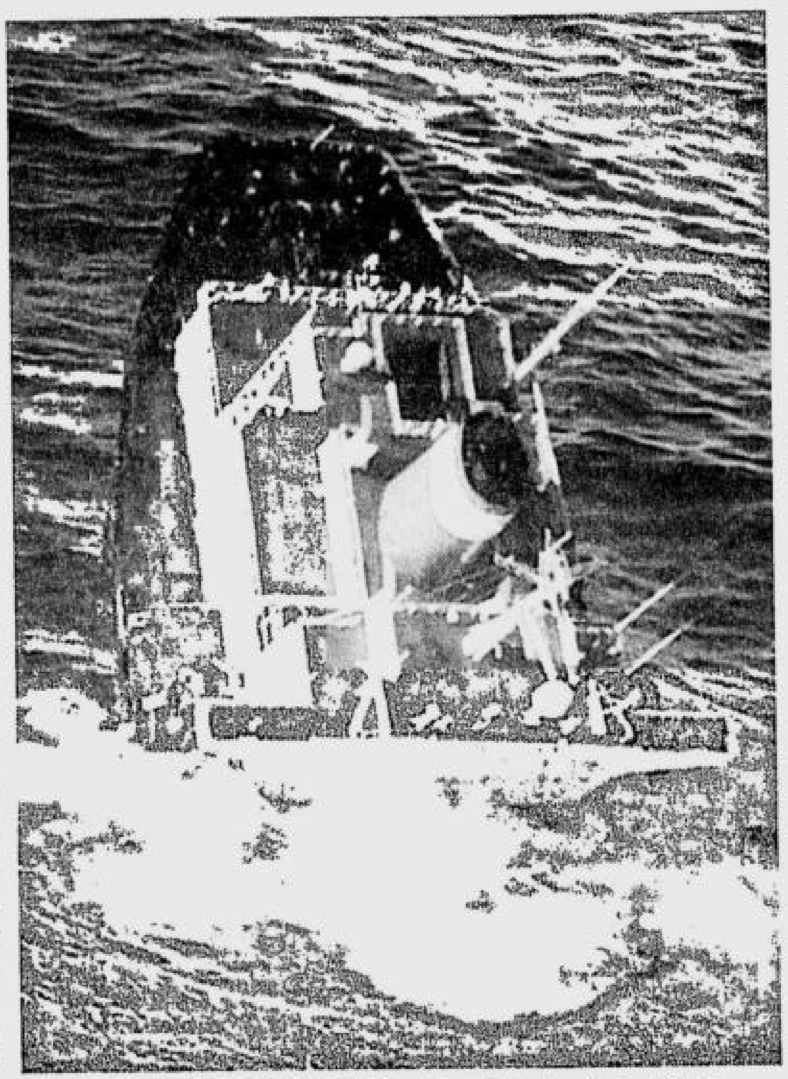
Ecologists feared the 26-year-old Prestige was now an environmental time bomb when it came to rest 210 km off the Spanish coast and 3.6 km below the surface.

The scenic shores of Galicia, in northwest Spain, were already blackened over a stretch of more than 80 km by fuel oil from the stricken vessel.

Galicia, which depends on fishing and summer tourism for its livelihood, fretted over its future as its diverse reserve of fish and shellfish came under threat.

Portugal expressed displeasure with Spain for towing the disabled tanker for several days after it first broke down a week ago to a spot that put its spilt oil on a wind-aided course for Portuguese shores as well.

Doubts lingered over whether more could have done more to prevent Europe's second major disaster in three years involving an old-fashioned single-hulled tanker.



THE BAHAMAS-REGISTERED Prestige oil tanker sinks off the Spanish coast in the Atlantic Ocean on Nov. 19. AP

"Disasters like the Prestige reveal the impotence of European authorities . . . and also raise doubts over who defends the public interest when it becomes intertwined with diverse private interests," leading newspaper El Pais said in an editorial.

The ship, with a Liberian owner sailing under a Bahamas flag, was chartered by the Swiss-based Russian oil trader and operated by a Greek maritime company.

All that was likely to complicate Spain's stated intent to make whoever was responsible pay.

The 26-year-old Prestige had 77,000 tons of viscous fuel oil on board when it broke down in a storm last Wednesday, and took an estimated 60,000 tons with it to the ocean floor.

It left behind it an oil slick some 280 km long by 28 km wide.

Some experts expressed hope the toxic fuel oil in its tanks would harden due to frigid temperatures and high pressure in the deep dark sea, sparing rich fisheries nearby.

Ecologists rushed distressed sea birds coated in tar to a rescue center in the regional capital of La Coruna, and hundreds of navy officials joined volunteers on some beaches on Tuesday, shovelling and even vacuuming up thick black sludge.

But locals said the impact could be long-lasting for some of Europe's richest fisheries, famous for gourmet delicacies such as lobster, goose barnacles, mussels, octopus and crab.

"This is going to take 10 years to recover. They try and clean it up but the sea brings in more," said retired fisherman Jose Camano, 72, staring at the tar-covered beach at Caion.

"This means complete ruin for us. Who will buy our fish now?"

Weather forecasts said westerly winds should carry the gigantic spill toward the Galician coast, increasing pressure on regional authorities who rushed to place some 28 km of inflatable barriers across the mouths of the region's unspoilt river valleys.

A fleet of tugs, cleanup vessels and aircraft from around Europe approached the site of the sinking, some 210 km west of Spain's coastline. But five-meter waves prevented them from containing any oil on the surface.

Authorities estimated the slick on Galicia's coast had already thrown 4,000 fishermen out of work and left 28,000 people in associated industries temporarily without jobs. *Reuters*

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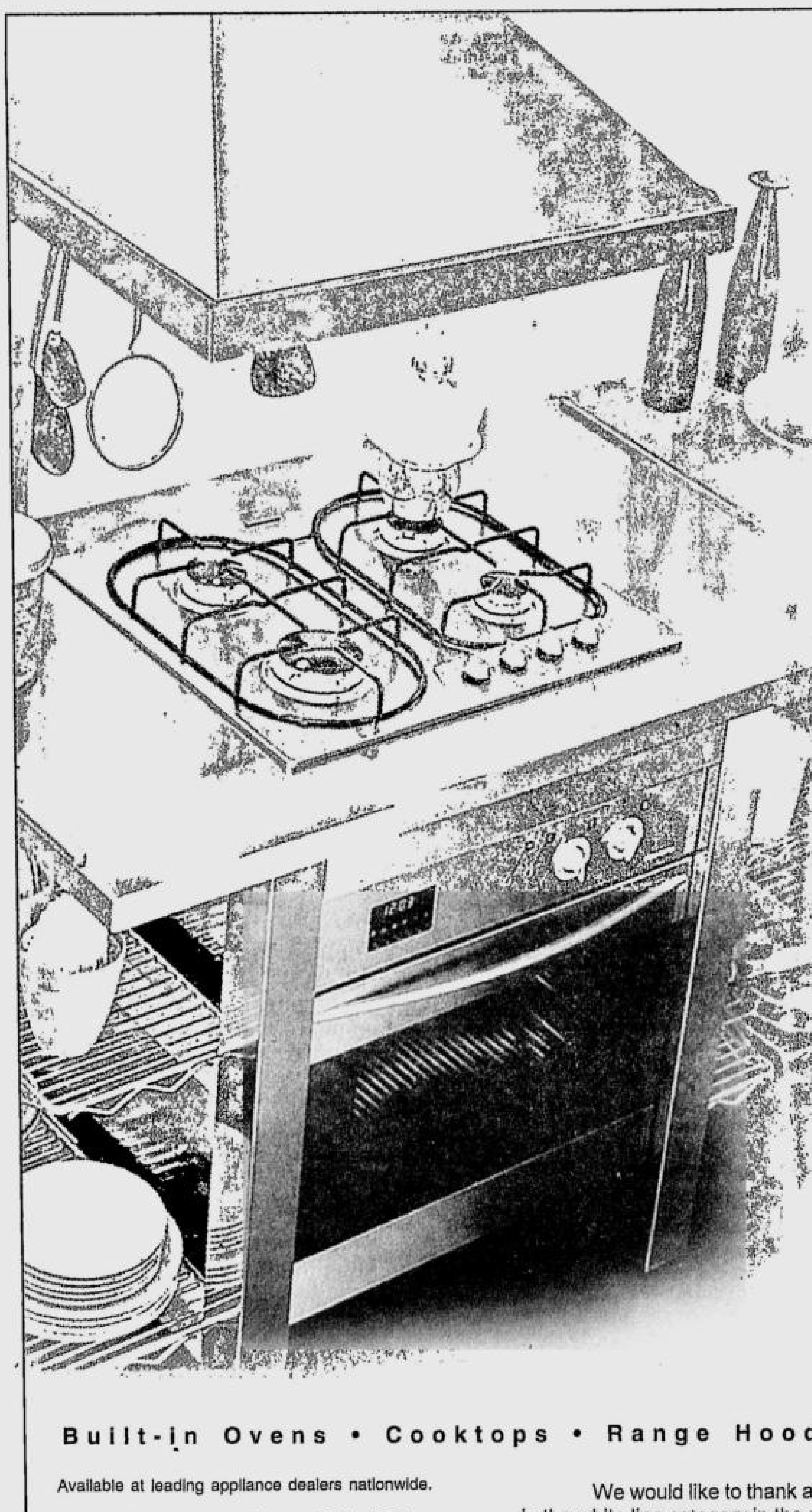

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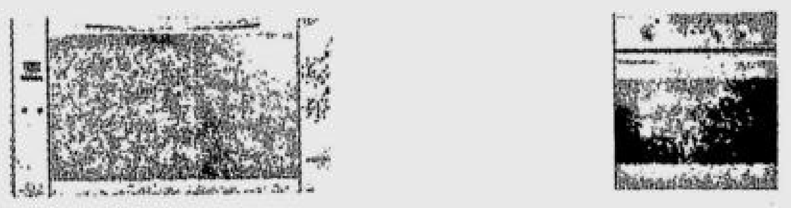

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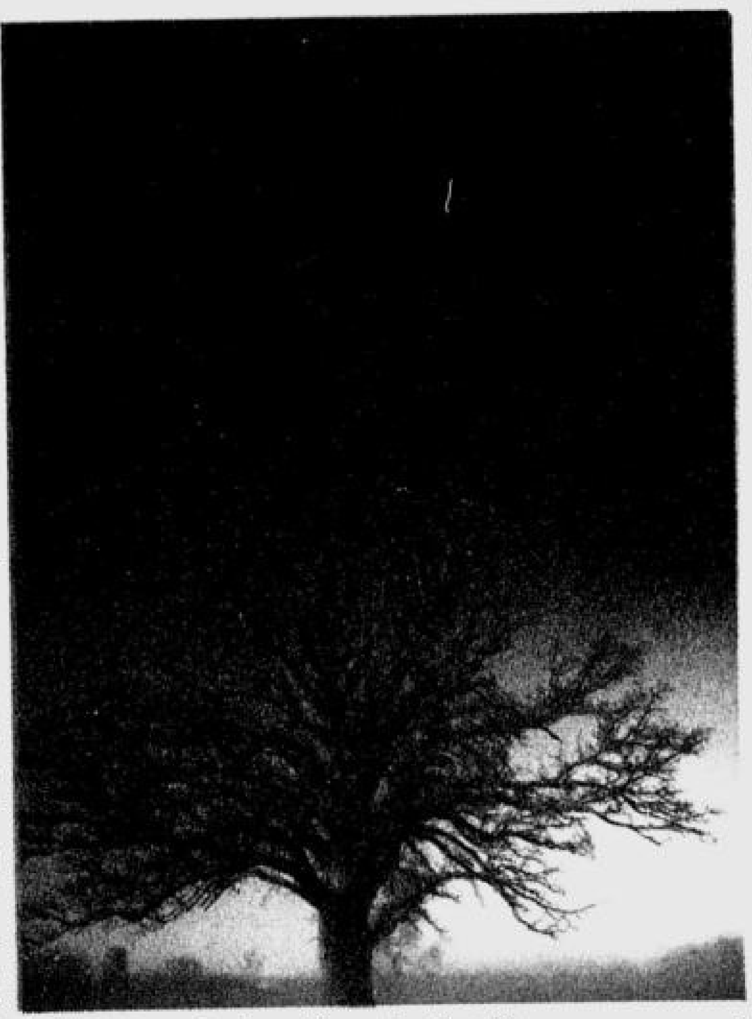
‘Too many shooting stars to count,’ say lucky ones



A LEONID streaks above Missouri on Nov. 19 AP

PARIS—The Leonid shooting stars returned over Western Europe and North America Tuesday, enthralling some lucky astronomers with a once-in-a-generation show but leaving others, blanketed by thick cloud, cruelly disappointed.

The meteors show up every November, when the Earth slams into a trail of rubble left by the comet Tempel-Tuttle, causing the debris to burn up in glittering, fiery streaks as it enters the atmosphere.

This year had been billed as the greatest spectacle for the next three decades, and skywatchers living in countries where the meteor shower was visible at its peak had been awaiting the moment for months.

Many of those who lived in the central latitudes of western Europe were disappointed by cloud and fog which added to viewing problems caused by a bright, almost full Moon.

But in Scandinavia and parts of North America, it was a different story.

Astronomers saw a meteor every five or six seconds during two dazzling 15-minute peaks six hours apart, even though this was not the “storm” that many had hoped.

Contributions to the dozens of Leonids reporting sites on the Internet painted a tableau of a sky streaked with gold and green, with the occasional flare of a fireball, as the comet’s stony legacy burned up.

“Great show!” enthused Jarle Aasland of Stavanger, Norway, as a Leonid streaked overhead shortly before dawn European time, when the first meteor wave hit.

“I have seen three nice Earth-grazers in the past five minutes . . . all blue green in color and all had a fluffy look to the tail,” said John Turner of Fort Pierce, Florida, reporting on spaceweather.com. “Absolutely amazing!”

“There were too many shooting stars to count,” Phillipe Ayres, who watched the event with his family in Port St. Lucie, Florida, told space.com. “The colors were bright and clear with momentary smoke trails.”

Comets are believed to be mainly composed of frozen water and frozen carbon dioxide, mixed with rocks, pebbles and dust.

As they come closer to the Sun, the ice melts, depositing tiny pieces of rocks and dust in a wake that gradually widens out as the centuries pass.

They whack into the Earth’s atmospheric molecules at 71 km per second, and the friction causes them to vaporize and burn up.

As they appear in the sickle-shaped constellation of Leo, the Lion, the meteors are known as the Leonids.

In recent years, the Leonids have been magnificent because of the rocky treasure deposited by Tempel-Tuttle during its last flyby, in 1998.

This year’s meteors had been eagerly awaited because the Earth ploughed through two thick trails left in 1767 and in 1866.

Cosmic arithmetic means this will be the last time for many years that our planet will traverse such a rich meteor source, probably until 2033, after the comet’s next flyby, or maybe even as long as 2098.

Asia and the southern hemisphere were left out of this year’s Leonids party because of the time and the Earth’s tilt, although astronomers there followed events via the Internet, where photographs and film clips were posted by their lucky colleagues on the other side of the world.

The Leonids continue for the next couple of days, but at a far weaker rate, before tailing off completely.

The next chance to see a meteor will be on Dec. 14, when the annual Geminids show up. *AFP*

Iraq vows to cooperate, account for all weapons

BAGHDAD—Iraq vowed to meet the first big test under a UN resolution by providing a complete account of its arms program, and chief UN weapons inspector Hans Blix said on Wednesday that Baghdad pledged full cooperation.

Blix arrived in Cyprus from a two-day trip to Baghdad where an advance team of inspectors is laying the ground for a resumed hunt for banned weapons.

A UN Security Council resolution requires Baghdad to grant inspectors unfettered access to suspected sites or face a possible US-led attack to force disarmament.

“We had good discussions with representatives of the Iraqi government and (they) assured us they will fully implement the resolution and cooperate with us, so it was a constructive visit,” Blix told reporters in Larnaca.

Egypt’s Mohamed ElBaradei, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, who accompanied Blix during his trip said: “They (Iraqi officials) made it very clear they will do everything possible to cooperate.”

The United States has accused Baghdad of using the four years since UN inspectors were last in Iraq to develop weapons of mass destruction.

Iraqi newspapers said on Wednesday the inspectors would soon verify that Iraq had no such weapons and the United Nations should lift sanctions imposed after the 1991 Gulf War.

US President George W. Bush, in Prague for a Nato summit, is due to kick off his campaign to win political support for his hard-line policy against Iraq with a series of meetings on Wednesday with world leaders, including Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Bush has said the inspections, on the tough terms set out in Security Council Resolution No. 1441, are Baghdad’s last chance to abandon peacefully its alleged chemical, biological and nuclear arms programs.

Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov said Iraq’s agreement to let arms inspectors return had deflected the likelihood of war.

“The adoption of Resolution 1441 . . . and Iraq’s consent to the return of international inspectors ward off the real threat of war and open a way for a comprehensive settlement of the Iraqi problem,” Ivanov wrote in an article published on Wednesday in Kommersant, Russia’s leading business daily.

Under the resolution adopted on Nov. 8, the first big test is the Dec. 8 deadline for Iraq to submit a full account of all banned weapons programs.

“Within 30 days, as the (UN) resolution says, a report from Iraq will be submitted on all the files—nuclear, chemical, biological and missile files,” President Saddam Hussein’s adviser General Amir al-Saadi told reporters on Tuesday.

Asked if the inspectors would have unfettered access to all sites in Iraq, Saadi said: “Yes, that is as stipulated in the resolution and as we have agreed with them.” *Reuters*

Husband-battering on the rise

HONG KONG—Hong Kong’s economic woes have led to a surge in domestic violence by wives against their husbands, government figures showed Wednesday, as social workers expressed fears the problem could worsen.

The number of husband-battering cases rose to 179 last year from just 39 in 1998 while 62 cases were recorded in the first three months of this year alone, social welfare departments said.

“The problem is getting serious,” social worker Christine Chow Pui-chi of the Caritas Family Crisis Support Center said. “In the past, it was the men who played a dominant role in the Chinese family, but nowadays women who used to play a subordinate role are asserting their rights too as they get more financially independent.”

Many women were driven to commit spousal abuse because their husbands could no longer provide the financial support necessary to maintain their wives’ lavish lifestyles, Chow said.

“Others because they want to take revenge for their husbands’ earlier wrongdoings such as having extra-marital affairs,” she said.

Chow said that when the economy was booming, wives tended to keep their counsel silent even when they were unhappy as their husbands were bringing in money.

“These abused men need help and support to restore their battered confidence,” Chow said, adding that her center was the only refuge for male victims of abuse in the city of nearly seven million.

Despite the alarming figures, abuse of women by their husbands remains far more common and is rising, from 970 cases in 1998 to 2,254 last year. There were 684 recorded cases in the first three months of 2002.

Social workers pinned the rise in spousal abuse on financial problems, citing the rise in Hong Kong’s unemployment rate to a record 7.8 percent in July.

The city’s once high-flying economy grew just 0.1 percent last year amid the global slowdown after soaring 10.5 percent in 2000.

Wilson Wong, a social worker at the center who counseled abused men, said victims came to the center for help to avoid their wives’ “impulse for violence.”

Recent sensational husband-abuse cases have made headlines in the local press. On Nov. 13, a 47-year-old woman was jailed for 33 months for cutting off her boyfriend’s foreskin with scissors after he said he wanted to leave her.

In August, a 50-year-old woman was jailed for life for murdering her husband by pouring boiling oil over his head and stabbing him 16 times.

And in December, a woman was jailed for four years for cutting off her philandering husband’s penis.

A spokesperson for the social welfare department said it was trying to stem domestic violence by adopting new initiatives and strengthening support for families by providing more targeted assistance. *AFP*

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1. The theme of the BANDERA NG ATING BAYAN PHOTO CONTEST is the Philippine flag. Contestants should photograph the Philippine Flag in a unique or dramatic situation.

2. Submit photo entry in 8R format (8" x 10"), either black & white or full color, original and not previously published in any form of print media. Each entry must include the corresponding negative or transparency

3. Contestants are required to fill out the official application form found in the tabloid, BANDERA, with their name, address, signature, contact number and attach three (3) clippings of the new BANDERA masthead.

4. Photocopies of the application form or the masthead will not be accepted.

5. Send entries to:
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6. Contestants may submit as many photo entries as they want, provided that each photo entry is accompanied by one (1) official application form and three (3) BANDERA mastheads.

7. PRIZES:
Prizes are as follows:
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8. A contestant may win only once. Should one contestant win more than once, He/She will get the prize of higher value.

9. CRITERIA:
Composition: 30%
Uniqueness: 20%
Technical: 20%
Overall Impact: 30%

10. BANDERA reserves the right over all submitted photo entries. Entries will not be returned to their respective owners. By entering the contest, each entrant agrees that BANDERA may use his/her name or image for contest promotion

11. Deadline for submission of entries is on 5pm of December 18, 2002. Provincial entries must allow one (1) week for mailing. BANDERA will not be responsible for any lost or delayed entries.

12. A panel of judges will determine winning photos with the presence of a DTI representative on December 20, 2002.

13. The list of winners will be published on the December 23, 2002 issue of BANDERA. Winners will also be notified by registered mail

14. All employees of Inquirer Publications, Inc., and its affiliate companies, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest.

15. Winners should present winner's notice and two (2) valid IDs when claiming their prize. Prizes may be claimed in the following areas:

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WORLDBRIEFS

New US department

WASHINGTON—Winding down the 107th Congress, the Senate approved the largest government reorganization since World War II in hopes of helping prevent another Sept. 11-type attack. But the long effort may have been just a warm-up for a bigger battle to come: getting the new Homeland Security Department up and running. “Setting up this new department will take time, but I know we will meet the challenge together,” a jubilant President George W. Bush said after the Senate, nearing adjournment for the year, voted 90-9 on Tuesday to authorize the new Cabinet agency. *AP*

Antiterror center

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia has agreed to set up an antiterrorism center in partnership with the United States, Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar announced after a Cabinet meeting Wednesday. It will be known as the Southeast Asia Center for Counter-Terrorism and will focus on “capacity-building” and understanding the issues related to terrorism, he said. Experts from around the world will serve as instructors at the center, which will be open to all members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations when it is launched some time next year. *AFP*

New Labor leader

JERUSALEM—After 20 months of cooperating with the Israeli right, Labor elected the dovish Amram Mitzna to lead the party into January elections, offering a quick return to peace talks with the Palestinians. But the violence continued, with Israeli troops killing six Palestinians in West Bank raids. Even as the Haifa mayor celebrated his meteoric rise to the top, analysts warned of an uphill struggle for him to reunite his party, dispirited after sitting in the right-wing government of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for nearly two years. *AFP*

Odd thriller

BERLIN—Singer Michael Jackson briefly dangled a baby over the railing of his fourth-floor hotel window on Tuesday, providing a momentary if odd thriller for fans waiting on Berlin’s central square below. The “King of Pop” arrived in the German capital after three days of testimony last week in California in a $21-million lawsuit by a German promoter over cancelled concerts. A crowd of screaming fans greeted the reclusive entertainer, in town to receive a lifetime achievement award at a ceremony on Thursday night, in front of the Adlon Hotel. *Reuters*

Royal support low

LONDON—Public support for Britain’s royal family has sunk to its lowest level for 15 years amid its worst crisis since the death of Princess Diana, a new poll showed on Wednesday. Accusations of homosexual rape and fraud by members of Prince Charles’s staff, the collapse of a theft trial of Diana’s former butler Paul Burrell and his subsequent revelations of private-life secrets have pushed support for the royals down to 43 percent, the ICM poll for The Guardian newspaper found. The figure compares with 59 percent support earlier in the year after the funeral of the popular Queen Mother and the queen’s wildly successful Golden Jubilee celebrations, and is the lowest since the poll began in 1987. *Reuters*

Scandalous moans

BERLIN—A group of weary Berliners have gone to court to try to close down a swingers’ club on the ground floor of their building whose members’ moans of pleasure and screams of delight are keeping them awake. “My wife has to reach for the ear plugs every night because the unmistakable sounds of sexual intercourse can be heard throughout the building,” said one lawyer who lives on the first floor, directly above the club known as “Zwielicht”—a German word meaning both “twilight” and “dubious.” “We’ve been forced to come up with our own noise to drown out the sounds from down below,” he added. *Reuters*

Quality first

SINGAPORE—Quality not cost is the overriding factor for women buying gifts in the Asia-Pacific this festive season, according to a survey released Wednesday. Apart from a handful of lavish ladies, mainly in Hong Kong and Australia, most who responded to the MasterCard survey said that despite the economic turbulence, they would be spending about the same as last year. In a poll of nearly 2,500 women in eight countries, most chose “quality” as the most important criteria when buying gifts this year, except in Hong Kong and the Philippines where meeting the “wants” of friends was most important. *AFP*

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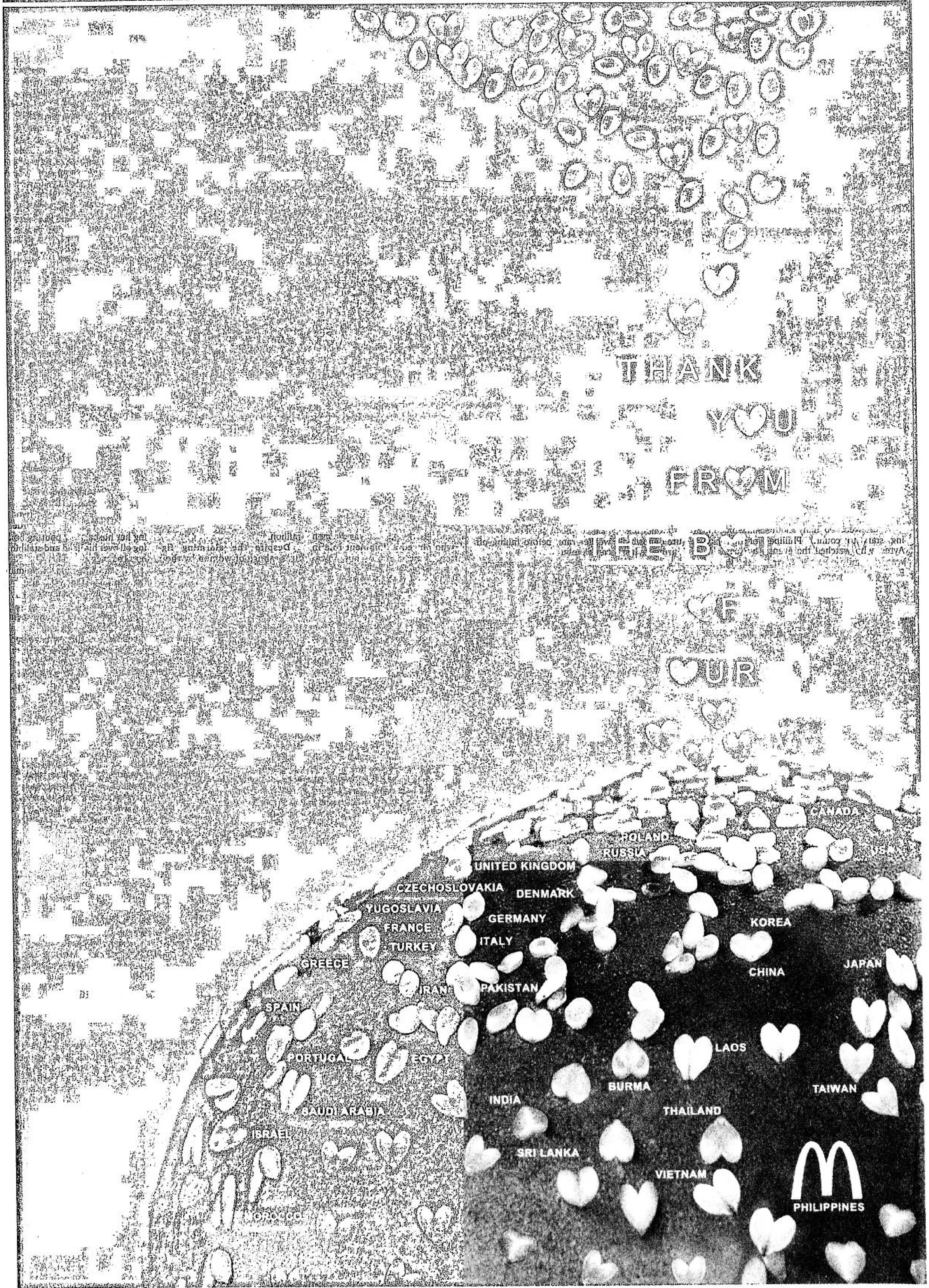
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500 families face eviction in Pampanga

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Some 500 families are alarmed over their possible displacement from a 23-hectare property that the provincial government is developing as a mass housing site for capitol employees.

The land dispute covers areas in Barangays Sta. Lucia and San Pedro Cutud, also the location of the famous Lenten crucifixion rites here, surfaced again as the affected residents trooped to the capitol on Monday for a dialogue.

Fernando Henson, Pampanga planning and development officer, maintained that the provincial government owns the lot.

Gov. Manuel Lapid and the provincial board decided to use the site after selling this October a 40-ha property in Barangay Maimpis, the original location of the housing project for some 1,500 capitol employees.

The Maimpis lot was sold to the Right Pak International, a subsidiary of brewery giant San Miguel Corp., for P143 million.

Henson showed the INQUIRER a copy of Transfer Certificate of Title 195169-R, issued by the Registry of Deeds in 1983, to attest to the provincial capitol's ownership of the 23-ha property.

He said the land was bought at P1 per square meter from the National Housing Authority during the term of former Gov. Estelito Mendoza.

The same property, he said, was within the 100-ha land owned by the NHA in the two villages.

Rose Ocampo, a councilor of Barangay San Pedro Cutud, said the residents were legitimate holders of Certificates of Land Transfer from the government's agrarian reform program.

Showing a master list of recipients, Ocampo said the lands were distributed from 1974 to 1975. Their parents, she added, were former tenants of the Whitacare family. The residents also showed receipts for payment of real estate taxes.

Site filling activities since Nov. 9 by the capitol engineering's unit to start the road network of the housing project had damaged 15 ha of newly planted palay, according to Ocampo.

The dumping activities were not coordinated with the farmers, said Hermogenes Sunga, who tills a 2-ha farm in the formerly lahar-swamped villages.

Barangay Councilor Antonio Ocampo appealed for an immediate settlement to the land dispute. Those who are now in the disputed property, he said, have been displaced by Mt. Pinatubo's lahar and have returned after getting no units in government-managed resettlement sites.

Others have remained in five resettlements, he added.

The land controversy first surfaced when the wife of former San Fernando Mayor Paterno Guevarra tried to sell a portion of the contested area to the provincial government as a site for its project to build a convention center.

The late Gov. Bren Guiao opposed the plan to buy the land, saying the lot was NHA-owned. The housing agency later sold the 23 ha for P230,000 on condition that the property would be used to develop a convention center, Henson said.

He said more families moved into the property when a civic foundation, led by Guevarra, used portions of it as a relocation site for the homeless.

But because there were claimants or squatters on the property, Guiao changed the plan for the convention site, preferring instead to use a portion of the Pampanga High School property.

Anshari Datupaito, provincial director of the Office of Muslim Affairs, said some 300 Muslim families living on a 3-ha lot in San Pedro Cutud's Purok Cuatro could not be moved out. That land, he said, was obtained through proper means.

But the provincial government appeared determined to push through with the housing project in the two villages.

On Monday, the provincial board approved on second reading a resolution requesting the NHA to allow a change in land use, this time for a housing project.

Lapid allayed fears of long-term displacement. He said the provincial government was setting aside a 20-ha land as a relocation area for the affected residents. However, he said this plan still needs the approval of the NHA.

On the venue of the local Calvary, which has become a yearly tourism event, Henson said the NHA was also being asked to set aside an area for a shrine.

"We're doing everything so no one loses a home. We're talking. We want this settled once and for all," Lapid said.

THE MACHINE gun discovered by soldiers in Lopez, Quezon is displayed for the media DELFIN MALLARI JR.

Army finds machine gun in NPA armory

LUCENA CITY—The top official of the Southern Luzon Unified Command (Solcom) yesterday reported the discovery of a communist rebel armory in Barangay Ilayang Ilog, Lopez, Quezon on Tuesday.

Maj. Gen. Roy Kyamko, Solcom chief, said soldiers found a caliber-30 machine gun with complete accessories, 396 rounds of live ammunition and assorted medical equipment inside a plastic drum.

"They were tipped off by one of our informers and was voluntarily validated by the civilians in the area," Kyamko told the INQUIRER.

Maj. Jose Broso, Solcom spokesperson, described the machine gun as "well maintained and has just been cleaned."

"We were told by our informer that the NPA group that attacked the Lopez police station used the said high-powered firearm," he said.

He said they have invited for questioning an unidentified couple, which, he said, served as the caretaker of the armed cache.

The Solcom revealed that from January this year up to the present, they have recovered at least 301 firearms from the communist rebels. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Black bugs infest Negros rice farms

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Black bugs have infested 107.35 ha of rice farms in three cities and two towns in Negros Occidental, according to a report from the Office of the Provincial Agriculturist.

Affected areas were the cities of Cadiz, Himamaylan and La Carlota as well as the towns of San Enrique and Moises Padilla.

But Provincial Agriculturist Igmedio Tabianan said black bugs infestation in Barangay Luna, Cadiz was considered alarming because it affected about 80 ha of rice land.

The sporadic presence of black bugs were also reported on 2 ha in Barangay Sicaba, and about half a hectare in Barangay Cadiz Viejo, both in Cadiz, Tabianan said.

Rice bugs infestation also affected 7.05 ha in Barangay Batuan, San Enrique, and 2.50 ha in Barangay Batuan, La Carlota.

But Tabianan said the bug infestation in San Enrique and La Carlota had been placed under control.

Black bugs slightly damaged about 13 ha of rice farm in Barangays Quintin Remo and Guinpana-an, Moises Padilla.

Also affected by the infestation were about one hectare in Barangay Batuan, La Carlota and half a hectare in Barangay Carabalan and .80 ha in Barangay Carabalan, both in Himamaylan.

Black bugs cause tremendous damage to rice at any stage of growth. Heavy infestation causes rice to wilt.

Tabianan said light-trapping operations had been conducted to curb the proliferation of the black bugs.

ROUNDUP

Bribe try denial

MATI, Davao Oriental—Mayor Francisco Rabat denied allegations he tried to bribe the leader of the protesting casual employees of the municipal government. Rabat, through his personal secretary Richard Villacorta, said it was his accuser, Joana Mabini who asked money. Mabini had earlier claimed that Rabat was offering her P30,000 to stop leading the protesters. Rabat has been under fire from casual employees for his failure to pay their salaries. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Filariasis treatment

CALAPAN CITY—Barangay captain Ranillo Patulan of Barangay Caagutayan in San Teodoro town thanked the medical team that continues to treat Mangyans affected with filariasis during the Filaria Health Fair in the barangay last Oct. 29. Lymphatic filariasis is caused by microfilariae-carrying mosquito that transfers microorganism by biting a person. The symptoms include swelling of the feet, arms, male organ and breast. There are 87 cases of filariasis in San Teodoro. Other towns where cases of filariasis have also been reported are Bongabong, Bulalacao, Mansalay, Roxas, Puerto Galera, Baco, Pinamalayan, Socorro and Victoria. *Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Village officials hit

SILANG, Cavite—Mayor Ruben Maglangsakay reminded barangay officials on Thursday of their duty in the collection of garbage as among their functions spelled out in the Local Government Code. This developed as the mayor noted the resurgence of mountains of garbage in several areas of the town, some of which are near barangay halls. Maglangsakay lamented that many barangays have delegated the duty of sanitation and solid waste collection to the municipal government. *Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

League has 2 heads

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Palawan provincial chapter of the Liga ng mga Barangay has two presidents after the provincial board accepted Taytay Association of Barangay Captains president Evelyn Rodriguez as its new member representing the league. Rodriguez's acceptance to the board came after a controversial delay and the members voted 9-1-1 favoring her admission. Current ABC provincial president and board member Joel Bito-onon, however, said "what happened is an early political exercise for 2004." Palawan would be deprived of programs and other benefits from the national league due to a crisis of leadership in the province, he said.
Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

X'mas bonus stolen

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Armed men on Thursday held up employees of a local college on Thursday and took away at least P780,000 intended as Christmas bonus for the college's teachers and employees. Police said two suspects aboard two motorcycles tailed the vehicle of eight employees and teachers of the Cagayan State University's (CSU) Piat campus. The employees came from this city and encashed a check from CSU's main campus. When their vehicle reached Barangay Maguirig in Solana town, the suspects fired their guns and asked the vehicle's driver to proceed to a forested area in the village where five other suspects were waiting. The suspects then took the P786,000 that the CSU employees were carrying, including their money and cellular phones, police said.
Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Hopes for tourism

LOCAL governments with high hopes on tourism are coming in strong this year with the 13th Philippine Travel Mart, an exhibition of travel destinations and tourism-related products and services. The exhibition will be held Nov. 22 to 24 at the Megamall Megatrade Halls. Among the exhibitors are the provincial governments of Bohol, Ilocos sur, Laguna, Palawan, Nueva Vizcaya, Pangasinan, Cagayan, Quezon, South Cotabato, La Union, Zambales, Negros Oriental, city governments of Puerto Princesa, Dagupan, Cebu City, Dumaguete and Tuguegarao.

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JERRY CARUAL

War vets seek release of P1.2B in unpaid pension

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The Macapagal administration owes about P1.2 billion in old age pension to some 200,000 war veterans, their leaders here said.

The amount, which an official of the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office (PVAO) confirmed on Monday, represented the accumulated unpaid monthly old age pension increase of P500 from January to June of 2001 and 2002.

Nicodemus Nasal, secretary-general of the Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon Veterans (HukVets), blamed Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin for the discontinuation of the payment during the periods.

"I think she has a wrong interpretation of the law," he said.

He pointed out that Republic Act 7696, which amended Republic Act 6948 that standardized and upgraded the benefits of military veterans and their dependents, entitled those 65 years old and above to the "monthly pension increases."

Under the amended law, they were to get P1,000 monthly for life. In the succeeding years starting January 1995, the amount "shall be increased annually by not less than P500 per month until total old age pension shall be at least P5000 per month."

"But we never received the monthly increase from January to June last year and this year," Nasal told the INQUIRER. "We have been deprived of benefits due to us by law."

Cesario Canlas, post commander of the Veterans Federation of the Philippines Pampanga (fourth district chapter), said the payments came only for July to December.

Canlas, 78, said he had gone several times to the PVAO in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City to urge the immediate release of the funds.

He said he was told by PVAO officials that there were no funds for the specific pension from the Department of Budget Management.

According to Nasal, the PVAO program on radio station DZRB had been swamped with the same inquiries since last year. He said even the primers on PVAO's services, both published and distributed this year, varied on the schedule of granting the P5,000 monthly old age pension.

One primer said it was Jan. 1, 2002 while another said it was July 1, 2002.

Both Nasal and Canlas said in separate interviews this problem was not much about the P5,000 but more on the P500 monthly increase or P6,000 that was not given them for 12 months.

"We may be getting P5,000 monthly but we asked: Where are the funds that we are supposed to get in 12 months?" Nasal asked. "The law is very clear. (The granting) is supposed to start every January, which was the way it was during the Ramos and Estrada administrations," he said.

The only reason for these veterans' woe was lack of funds from the DBM, said Romeo Madriaga, PVAO Central Luzon director.

"There were years when instead of the P1,000 monthly for life, our veterans received only P750 monthly," he said. According to Madriaga, the government had also not been paying the veterans their administrative disability pension since 1995.

He said that under RA 7696, veterans who are 70 years old and above are considered "disabled" and are supposed to get P1,700 monthly. Their spouse and children who are minors are also entitled to receive P500 monthly. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Minor raped by 7 older boys in Cebu jail

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—A family court judge wants an investigation on the repeated rape of an 11-year-old ward at the Cebu City-ran detention facility for minors by his seven cellmates.

Regional Trial Court Judge Pampio Abarintos yesterday told the INQUIRER that he would raise the matter during their regular meeting with the board members of the Operation Second Chance on Thursday.

He said the court did not receive any official report from the jail warden about the reported rape of the boy, which occurred from August to October this year.

As a family court judge, Abarintos is one of the members of the board that oversees the operation of the detention facility for minors in Barangay Kalunasan in this city.

Abarintos said he would ask Senior Supt. Ronald John Danao, Operation Second Chance jail warden, to submit an investigation report and to find out if the incident was isolated.

Danao filed criminal complaints for rape against the seven inmates, who were between 16 and 17 years old, before the Cebu City Prosecutor's Office last week.

The complaints stemmed from the allegation of James (not his real name) who has been detained at the Operation Second Change since Aug. 21 on theft charges.

In the complaint, James claimed that he was molested from August to October.

James recalled that he was taking a bath when one of his cellmates forced him to squat and did anal sex on him.

In September, another cellmate abused him while he was taking a bath. He said he tried to resist but the suspect was bigger than him.

James said another cellmate allegedly raped him on Oct. 31 while four other cellmates held his hands and feet to stop him from resisting.

James said he kept silent because his cellmates warned him he would be hurt if he told the jail officials about his ordeal.

Jail Officer 1 Romeo Felisilda said jail officials had investigated the alleged rape.

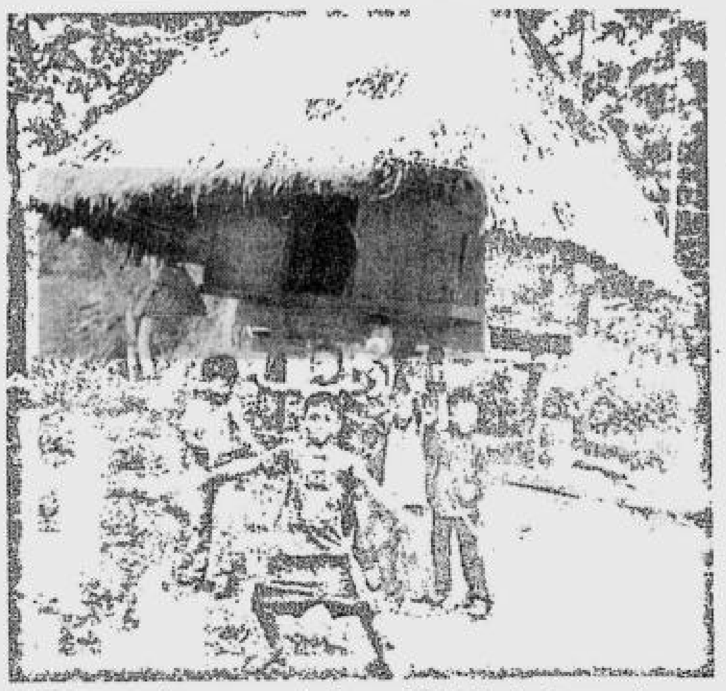
He said they only learned about the incident when James confessed about it during a session of the Therapeutic Community modality, which is part of the rehabilitation program for the minor offenders.

Felisilda said James was immediately placed in a separate cell during the investigation.

He said a social worker has been assigned to look after him.

The other boys have been placed in a separate cell to isolate them from the other inmates.

Jail officials have barred reporters from interviewing the minor, citing a policy that prohibits interviews of wards in the facility because their cases are considered confidential. *With a report from Suzzane B. Salva, PDI Visayas Bureau*



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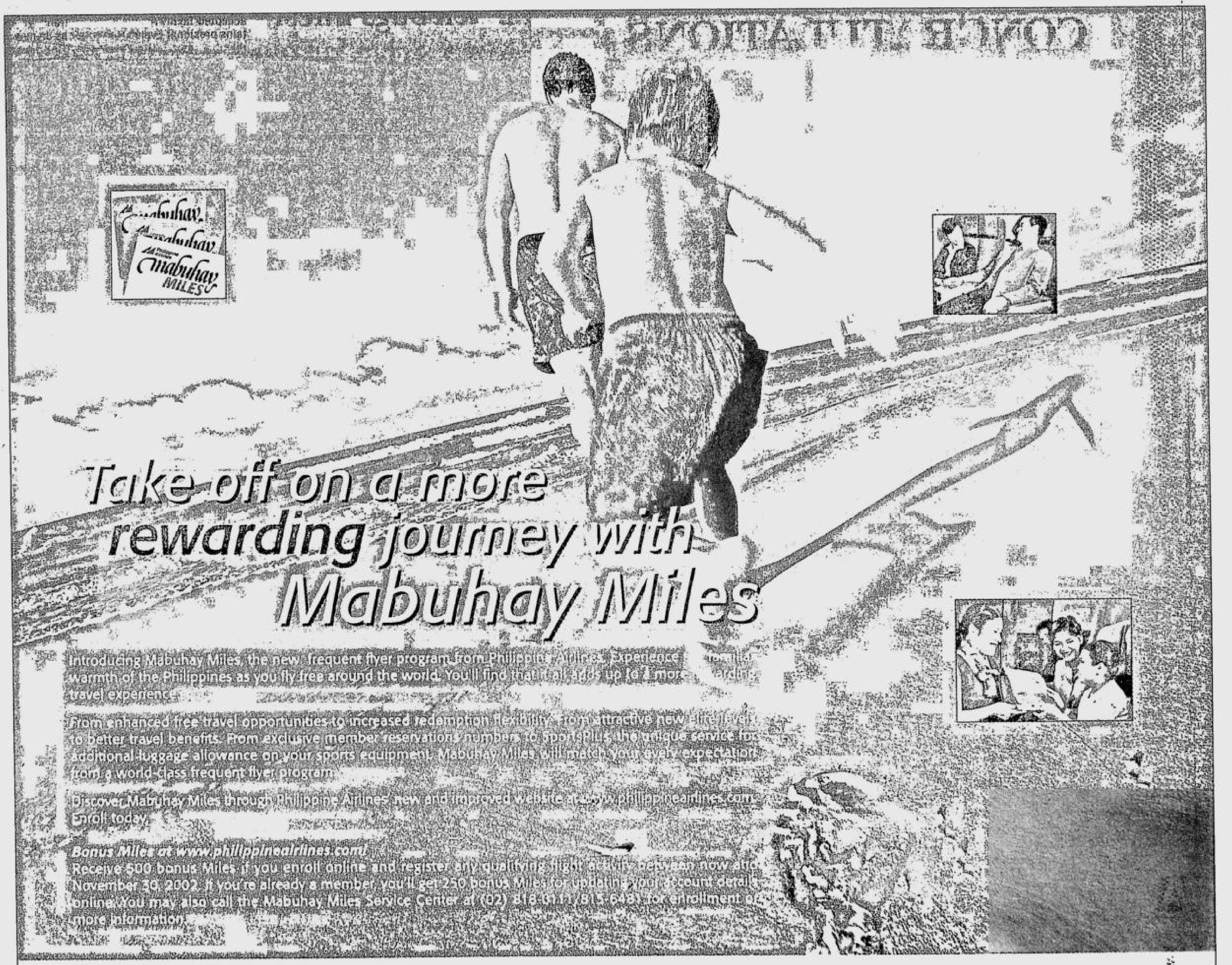

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Editor Jun Bandayrel · Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Doctors take time off to treat poor Pinoys

By Mei Magsino
San Juan, Batangas

DR. BERNIE Palomares and wife Elba, both pathologists, packed their suitcases for a month-long vacation in the Philippines. They have been working in Loris Hospital in South Carolina since 1974 and have their own clinic in the United States.

When their plane landed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport on Nov. 8, the couple did not take any connecting flight to Boracay or Palawan, or any tourist spot in the country.

They met with four fellow doctors from the US and the coordinator of the medical mission in San Juan District Hospital in Batangas, where they were scheduled to do major and minor surgeries for free.

Nine Filipino doctors from Manila joined them in San Juan, four of them from Batangas.

The medical mission was a joint project of the Rotary Club of San Juan, the Winthrop Harbour Lion's Club (Chicago, Illinois, USA), and the Batangas Crown with the support of the Lion's Club International Foundation.

From Nov. 9 to 15, more than 200 patients, some of them coming from the neighboring town of Lobo flocked to the medical mission in this town.

On the first day alone, the mission performed eight major surgeries and 15 minor operations. The surgeries involved hysterectomy, ovarian surgery, thyroid surgery, goiter operation, cataract operation, and cyst and myoma removal.

"After this mission, it's not even a vacation yet," Bernie Palomares said. They were supposed to have three more medical missions.

"We've been doing this for 16 years, and always, after helping my fellow Filipinos, it never ceases to give me that kind of satisfaction," he said.

Bernie could have been earning big bucks in the US for a 30-day work, or he and his wife could have been basking on the beaches. But they chose to take time off to go to the Philippines and give free medical services to Filipinos.

"There is more need in the Philippines," he added, "We could go somewhere else, but I prefer to help my fellow Filipinos. Here, I could empathize more, relate more, and help more."

Psychic satisfaction

Dr. Robert Gormley, an ophthalmologist from Niagara, got a call from Dr. Jeffrey Zervos and Dr. Palomares, his friends who have been giving free medical missions in the Philippines.

"I packed my bags and just came here," Gormley said. "There's the need here. And if the people think they're lucky to have us, they're wrong. We're the lucky ones because we, doctors, get some kind of psychic satisfaction in doing this."

Gormley said doctors like him have been doing medical missions all over the world.

"It's like payback time," Gormley said. "We, doctors, have been blessed to get to where we are now. And we need to give back something to the people."

Dr. Jeffrey Zervos, an ophthalmologist from Minnesota, said the medical missions have been giving doctors like him the incomparable satisfaction that some people are still alive now or will live longer because of their free service.

"It feels so satisfying to know that somehow, you have made a difference in the lives of these people and they would remember that for as long as they live," Zervos said.

It was Zervos' third time in the Philippines doing free medical treatments and surgeries to poor patients.

He has known Brenda Yonzon, the medical mission coordinator for two years. He said the two of them have been helping each other plan the mission.

But why choose the Philippines?

"I see the need here is greater," Zervos said, "and my wife, Marichu, is a Filipina. She's from Bauan town, also in Batangas."

On their first day, Zervos already performed three major surgeries.

"People here are very appreciative," he added. "And it feels good to help people and asking nothing in return."

Volunteerism

For surgeons Dr. Robert Sy and wife Dr. Marissa Sy from the Chinese General Hospital, the medical missions have been giving them an uplifting feeling of having helped people from the remote areas of the Philippines.

Like the American doctors, they also took a vacation leave to join the medical mission.

"We've been volunteer doctors for decades now," Marissa said. "And we have encountered so many difficulties in the past. Sometimes, we perform a sensitive operation inside a schoolroom with no lights on, just a flashlight, or just under a *sampaloc* tree. But we have to make do with what is available. We volunteered for it. But after the operation, it feels so good to be hugged by the people whom we have helped."

"If we don't do this, who would?" Robert said, "If there are no medical missions, sick people who can't afford to pay the hospital bills won't have another chance at life. And in the Philippines, there are so many people who need medical attention but don't have the money."

The couple brought their own anesthesiologists from the Chinese General Hospital, hospital equipment and medicines to the San Juan District Hospital where the mission was held.

Robert recalled the time when a former patient from Nueva Ecija came to the hospital to give him three pieces of *macapuno*. The patient said those were the first fruits of his *macapuno* tree that he planted after his surgery.

"He said he wanted me to have the first fruits of his labor after I saved his life when I operated on him for free," Robert added.

"For me, it's not the gift that counts, it's the gesture of the people whom doctors like me have helped that gives me the kind of satisfaction you get nowhere else."

Amazing

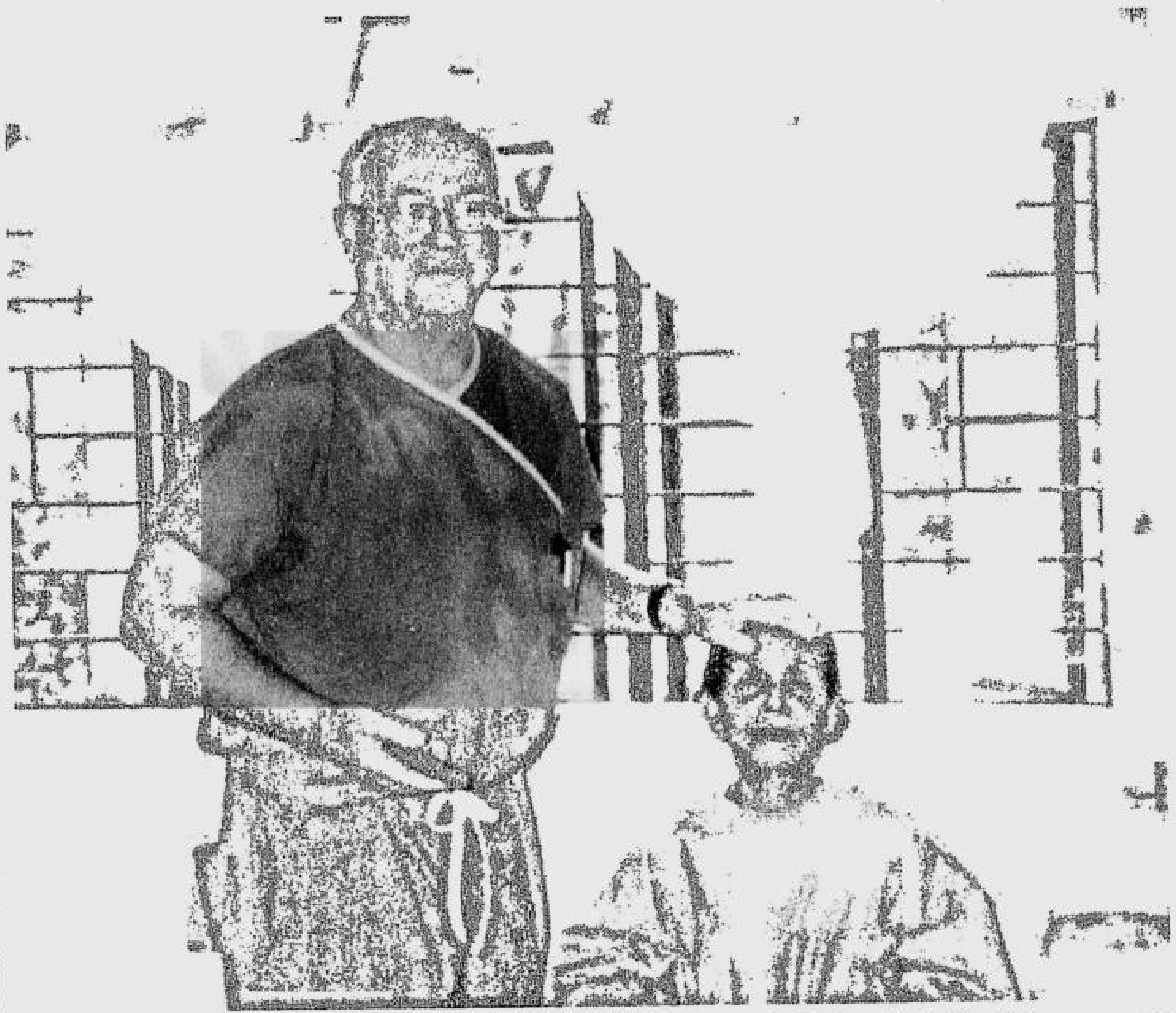
"These doctors are amazing," Rotarian Mariquit Reventar said, "they come from as far as the United States and give people a second chance at life but they ask for nothing in return."

During the week-long medical mission, where the Rotary International and the Lion's Club joined forces for the first time to help the people, hundreds of patients got another chance to live a healthy and longer life—courtesy of the doctors who decided to make a difference.

"I believe in medical missions which perform surgeries as this one," Reventar said. "They create a bigger impact on the people's lives," she added.

Belen Sevilla, a 78-year-old cataract patient who had just been operated on, said she has never lost faith in God.

"God sends us angels," she said. "And I'm going to see again because God has sent one to make me see the world again."



DR. ROBERT Gormley with patient Belen Sevilla before the cataract operation at the San Juan District Hospital. MEI MAGSINO

Mindoro villagers learn more about 'pawikan' protection

By Madonna Virola
Calapan City

AFTER the publication of the article "Mindoro villagers interact with 134 green sea turtles" (INQUIRER, Oct: 10), a team from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-Pawikan Conservation Project (DENR-PCP) based in Quezon City went to Roxas town in Oriental Mindoro where the reported sea turtles were found by the villagers to further educate the villagers on *pawikan* protection.

The team met with Roxas Mayor Jess Dimapilis.

Members of the Buklurang Lakas Mangingisda (BLM) who took care of the turtles released them to the sea after a few days, the INQUIRER report said.

The DENR-PCP was established on June 26, 1979 out of the need to save the population of sea turtles.

It was first known as Task Force Pawikan, created by Executive Order No. 542.

The DENR-PCP team divided itself into two. One group went to Barangay San Isidro in Roxas and coordinated with barangay chair Rosie Candido for the continuation of the campaign and information dissemination on the care of the *pawikan*.

It organized a film showing, which was attended by about 60 percent of the barangay population.

The team also distributed posters and reading materials on the *pawikan*. The people were alarmed when they learned that there is a law prohibiting the killing, capture, collection, selling and buying of *pawikan* and products that come from it. The villagers were used to butchering and eating the meat of the *pawikan* since the 1970s or even earlier.

The people also learned about the Fisheries Code of 1998, which prohibits the capture and acquisition of rare sea species including the *pawikan*. Penalty is payment of up to P120,000 fine or 12 years jail service.

The second group from the DENR-PCP went to Sitio Dalahican, Barangay San Jose, Roxas.

They passed by two barangays to reach Sitio Dalahican to know more about the reported big *pawikan* caught by another member of the BLM-Dalahican Chapter.

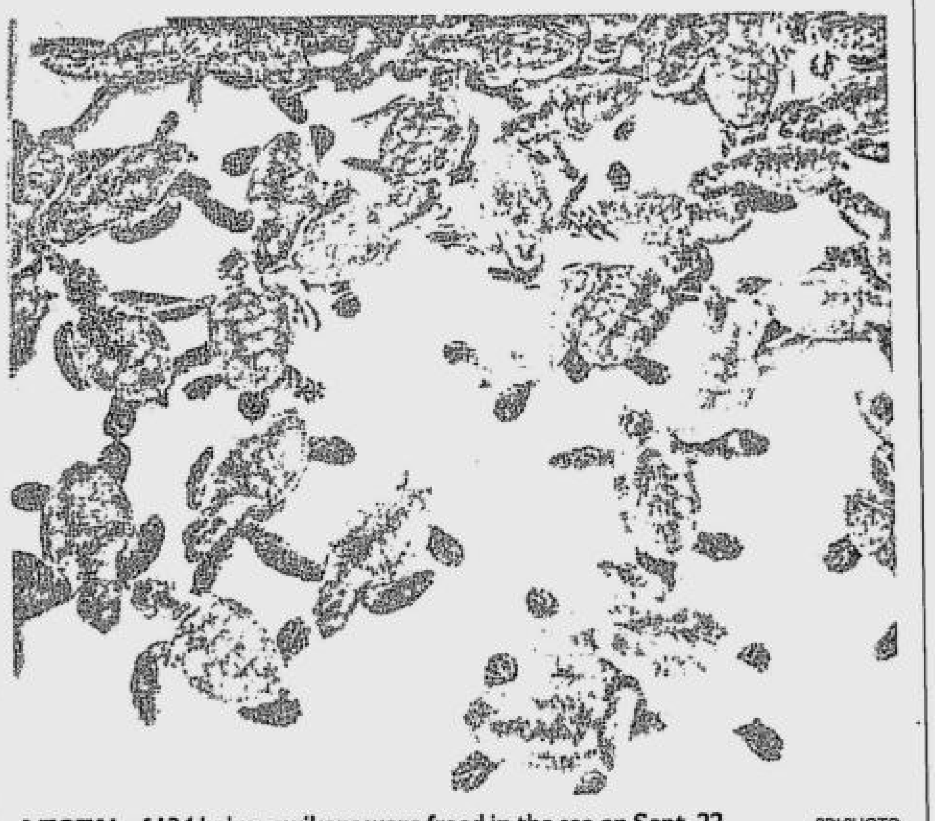
This time, fisherman Pacifico Saba caught a female green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) through a fishing net on Oct. 16.

The turtle weighed about 100 kg. Its carapace is 107 cm long while its curved carapace is 94 cm wide.

The turtle is believed to have been first captured in New Caledonia because of tag number RMTP 649 that was attached in its right flipper.

On Oct. 16 at around 2:30 p.m., DENR-PCP officers Ebenezer C. Palnegar and Romeo Gadon again put a tag numbered P-18875 in its left flipper.

The release of the green turtle was witnessed by Dimapilis, municipal council members, police officials, DENR personnel and BLM members.



A TOTAL of 134 baby pawikans were freed in the sea on Sept. 22. PDI PHOTO

Altersheim: An option for retired priests

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Naga City

FOR more than five years now, Msgr. Domingo T. Olaso, 69, has been on retirement.

He was made to retire a year earlier of the obligatory age after he suffered a third stroke and he immediately chose to stay in the Altersheim.

The Altersheim, German term for retirement home, is where retired priests of the Archdiocese of Caceres stay, if they choose it.

The Code of Canon Laws has made the retirement of priests aged 65 years old obligatory. This frees them from their priestly functions and obligations. However, a priest may continue practicing his priestly vocation for as long as his health permits.

In most cases, retired priests, who remain celibate until retirement age, have two options in dioceses with no provision for homes for the remaining years of their lives—stay with their relatives or seek refuge in parishes of fellow priests.

Staying in the Altersheim is the third option offered by the Archdiocese of Caceres.

Provisions

"Besides the amenities, comfort and security here, I feel I have never retired while doing priestly functions like giving mass for as long as I want," Olaso, who acts as a confessor of the Basilica, said.

A single-bed room with toilet and bath is equipped with an an air-conditioner, a small refrigerator, and a small colored television, facilities that make the life of aging priests comfortable.

The Altersheim has 10 rooms ready for occupancy.

Inaugurated on Sept. 3, 1988, Altersheim was conceived as a pilgrimage hotel for the devotees of Nuestra Señora de Peñafrancia, the Bicol Patroness.

The plan was shelved because the Archdiocese of Caceres needed more offices for its religious and administrative concerns.

Msgr. Romulo Vergara, rector of the Naga Basilica and the administrator of Altersheim, said donations from devotees of the Nuestra Señora and the Sacred Congregation for Mission of the Vatican Office funded the construction of the retirement home.

The Altersheim building also houses other offices for pastoral concerns and the mission office of the Daughters of Mary.

Expensive

Vergara said it is costly to maintain Altersheim. It includes provisions for each retired priest's daily basic needs and a medical assistance of P20,000 per year. But he said the Archdiocese of Caceres spends more than the medical assistance budget when grave illnesses strike a resident.

In some cases, the administrator asks the family or relatives of the priest to shoulder some of the medical expenses when budget runs out.

Vergara said the medical assistance budget remains a challenge for them because hospitalization always necessitates tens of thousands of pesos.

A nun from the Daughters of Mary does the volunteer work of caring for priests who get sick.

Sr. Juliet Howard, a midwife in profession and has long years of experience as caregiver, said she finds it her duty to share her profession to the aging priests.

Howard said she has prepared herself for the most difficult situation when old priests under her care become bedridden.

At the Altersheim, she has experienced giving care to a resident retired priest who was bedridden for eight years before he died.

There was also a time, Howard said, when she had to take care of two very sick priests. But she said the priests' relatives usually lend their hands.

Since it opened, Altersheim has served 12 retired priests. Only three remains under their care as the rest have already died.

Willie tags Nani suspect

From page A1

to the same mystery account in Hong Kong.

The Bulacan congressman said it was the executive branch and the judiciary which must pursue the case to its ultimate conclusion.

He scored the "deafening silence" of the National Bureau of Investigation and other investigating agencies.

During his speech, Villarama read his letter to Presidential Anti-Graft Commission Chair Dario Rama, who had asked him to provide information on his privilege speech last week about a million-dollar Cabinet official.

"In reply to your questions, I wish to advise that based on unverified information coming from reliable sources, the government official, who I believe, may either have intimate knowledge of, or have connection with the subject bribery is Secretary Hernando Perez," Villarama said in his letter dated Nov. 18.

When asked why he had cleared Perez after their meeting last week which allegedly patched up differences between them, Villarama shot back: "He said that, not me," prompting applause from the country's top non-life insurance firms who were holding a general meeting at the Manila Peninsula.

Perez's version

Interviewed by the INQUIRER, Perez had a different version of the meeting. Villarama had in fact assured him that he was not the one being referred to in the latter's privilege speech, Perez recounted.

"He told me that he has nothing against me," Perez told the INQUIRER. Asked if the lawmaker had any proof, Villarama supposedly said, "Nothing." "Are you referring to me? 'No,' Villarama reportedly replied. Should I expect more accusations? 'Not anymore. I don't know anything except this one.' That's what he told me."

Perez also said that Villarama had admitted to him that the two-page document on which he had based his privilege speech had no signatures from bank officials or proof of authenticity.

Villarama himself admitted yesterday that his information is still insufficient to pin down the Cabinet official for bribery save for information and documents given him by the bribe giver to one of his friends.

Villarama had also furnished the INQUIRER with the document which indeed bears no signatures or name of the account holder except for the account number with the Coutts Bank in Hong Kong.

At the insurers' meeting, Villarama said he had furnished Rama photocopies of the document of the Coutts Bank where the money was allegedly transferred from the Trade and Commerce Bank in Uruguay and the Chase Manhattan Bank in New York.

"Trusting that your commission will conduct the necessary inquiry so that the guilty may be held accountable to the full extent of our laws, or the innocent be cleared of any involvement," Villarama said.

When pressed about Perez in the open forum, Villarama said he believed, based on information from his sources, that Perez was the suspect in the $2-million bribery.

When asked him if the bribe giver was Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez, who had already been identified by Sen. Panfilo Lacson, Villarama said he has "no knowledge of that."

He said the identity of the bribe giver and the purpose of the bribe would be uncovered if there is an investigation of the mysterious bank account.

The Jimenez factor

Villarama, who is a close friend of Jimenez, had said in earlier interviews that the bribe came from a crony of ousted President Joseph Estrada who is into "some kind of problem." Jimenez is facing deportation to the United States. Villarama was president of the Manila Times when Jimenez still owned it.

Perez said that he hoped that Jimenez was not orchestrating the "demolition job" on him.

"I'm being hit on the basis of an unverified report all because somebody wants me to go slow on him. It can't be so. I have to do my duty."

Villarama said he delivered a privilege speech on Nov. 12 in response to a challenge hurled by Perez for him to name the $2-million Cabinet man.

Beyond reasonable doubt

"Ladies and gentlemen, I am convinced beyond reasonable doubt that the documents I have in my possession, which I have turned over to the (PAGC), if properly investigated, will uncover significant financial transactions of an illegal nature," Villarama said.

He said that if all sectors helped in putting the pieces of this jigsaw puzzle, "an intricate web of financial transactions would appear leading to the very doorsteps of corrupt officials and would firmly establish a case of plunder."

"If this administration fails to act on this case, then we have no one to blame but ourselves. Because the fight against corruption exempts no one, not even one who is expected to help dispense justice in this country," Villarama said in his speech.

Villarama said he saw hope in President Macapagal-Arroyo whom he said wouldn't allow "corruption as glaring as this to mar the noble aspirations of her administration."

Villarama recalled an instance when Ms Macapagal, then Vice President, asked him to return an "unsolicited gift of jewelry amounting to millions of pesos." Villarama was her chief of staff at that time.

"She returned it without hesitation or a tinge of regret. That was the Gloria I knew. And I believe that is the Gloria who would decide the fate of this million-dollar man," Villarama said.

Villarama said the Senate would play an important role in uncovering the $2 million, by immediately ratifying an agreement on "mutual legal assistance in criminal matters" with Hong Kong.

Congress probe

Lacson, who was the first to identify Perez as the $2-million man, has filed a resolution seeking an inquiry into the matter.

Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta said that Perez should set the example for other officials by squarely facing the issue to defend his honor.

She asked for him to leave office to face a congressional investigation.

Lacson chided Villarama for naming Perez too late and without specifying what transaction he was involved in, "whether Impsa or another."

"So, what took him so long to name Perez? When you make a privilege speech and you have documents, no one will believe you that you don't know who is involved. There's no substitute for truth," Lacson said.

He said he would surrender all his documents to the Senate blue ribbon committee detailing the paper trail of $2-million bribe from the Cayman Islands to Chase Manhattan to Coutts Bank.

Lacson asserted his documents were sufficient since he got them from "contacts" he developed as the former chief of the Philippine National Police.

HK agreement

Villarama recalled that Perez had said that there was no agreement with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region that could facilitate the investigation.

But he pointed out that it was Perez himself who signed the agreement on Feb. 23, 2001 or a month after Ms Macapagal assumed the presidency.

He said the agreement contained a provision that would allow the obtaining of evidence, articles or documents and extend to criminal matters relating to graft and corruption, unlawfully acquired or acquiring property, bribery, fraud against the public treasury or misappropriation or fraudulent conversion of public funds or property.

"I ask that the Senate ratify this agreement and thereafter request the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Justice to seek the help of the Hong Kong government in probing the bank accounts specified in the two submitted documents," he said.

Responding to the Senate's invitation for him and Jimenez to appear in an investigation, Villarama said he would prefer to appear in the House's own investigation.

But so far, no congressman has called for an inquiry on his exposé.

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said the Senate could not compel the two congressmen to attend if they do not want to go.

"They can just send an invitation. But they cannot be forced to appear there otherwise, we will also force Ping (Lacson) to appear in our investigation," Gonzales said.

Villarama joked with his audience about providing him insurance because of what he was about to say.

"Some of you must think me crazy for wanting to pursue this mystery despite the flak that I have been getting these past few days from media," he said.

He lamented that he had been called a coward, opportunist, pretender and wimp.

"Meanwhile, our million-dollar man remains at large, cloaked in anonymity, the beneficiary of this entire fracas," he said.

His exposé was expected by the PIC, headed by its president Nonnie Abad of the TICO Insurance.

The club's publication for the meeting contained an article titled "Who is the million dollar man?" and promised its members that they would get the "juicy details" that day from Villarama himself.

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Roco raps GMA 'secret meeting' with Lopezes

From page A1

cern was "to ensure that Meralco is stable financially so it can undertake the refund."

"She would like to assure everyone that she will implement the court's ruling," he added.

Senate President Franklin Drilon justified Malacañang's intervention, saying public interest required it.

He said the government had the obligation to save Meralco from possible collapse because of its 25-percent share in the firm. Also, he said, some of the firm's loans had been guaranteed by the government because the sources of funds were multilateral agencies such as the Asian Development Bank that required such guarantees.

"We're talking here about a public utility and, therefore, it is not in the same level as a shopping center or any ordinary company," Drilon said at a press conference. "Its operations are impressed with public interest because if it collapses financially, this can affect the services provided to consumers."

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, who was at the Senate for the hearing on the proposed budget of his department for next year, said consumers would suffer if Meralco's capability to distribute electricity were affected.

Camacho expressed agreement with Drilon's views, and pointed out that the government was extending the same assistance to big companies facing similar problems.

Dangers

But Roco said "two dangers" arose from whatever commitment was made during the meeting between Meralco executives and the President and her advisers.

"Number one, Meralco is ordered to refund its customers or correspondingly credit their consumers for future consumption. Meralco therefore owes the people," he said in a statement. "It will be an injustice built upon inequity."

The other danger, according to Roco, is that with the government's participation in the management of Meralco, it will alter its "legal situation."

"After a while, it would be difficult to determine whether it's Meralco or Secretary Perez deciding," he added. "This will confuse the accountability and corporate responsibility of Meralco. It will also pressure the ERC to favor Meralco since management is now shared with government."

Roco, who had earlier declared his intention to seek the presidency in 2004, called on all Filipinos to support the Supreme Court in the ruling that "empower(ed) the people."

He said the executive department should "not intrude into the situation (apart from getting ready to fully implement" the ruling.

He also said the President "should remember that her oath of office requires her to consecrate herself to the service of the nation and not to the service of any private corporation."

In his statement, Roco said Meralco as a public utility should "exercise extraordinary dedication to give light to the Filipino people."

"It is arrogance and irresponsibility to threaten the people with blackouts and financial collapse," he said, and noted that Meralco had brought upon itself the problems it was now saddled with.

Management

Tiglao said the government was considering taking an active hand in Meralco's management to help it make the ordered refund.

He said this option had been discussed, although not yet formally, but that the present priority was to restructure its loans so it could make the huge refund without going bankrupt.

"We haven't really come to that decision point," Tiglao replied when asked if the government would seek more board seats in Meralco. "Some people (have) discussed it, but it's not yet formally on the table. We're looking at the problems of Meralco first. The change in board seats should be later on."

While it has the biggest share holdings in Meralco at 26 percent, the government has a minority position in the board.

Upon the President's order, Perez has been meeting with Meralco officials, creditors and government stakeholders to save the firm from financial ruin. He reportedly met with the group again yesterday.

Tiglao said that the first meeting on Tuesday went smoothly, with a preliminary assessment of Meralco's financial status, and that a government takeover "was not discussed at all."

"If that's an option, the President's main concern here is that the distribution of electricity will not be disrupted," he added.

Reacting to criticism of the President's decision to keep her Friday dinner-meeting with Meralco executives secret, Tiglao said the Lopezes had asked that the affair be kept "private."

"Nobody asked, anyway," he said. adding:

Perez himself said the government was not bailing out Meralco.

"Through this (working) group, the government is providing a bridge for both parties—Meralco and its creditors—to find a mutually acceptable solution in addressing the objectives of the Supreme Court ruling," he said in a statement.

"This does not mean the government is bailing out. It only means that it is coordinating with various Meralco stakeholders so that the creditors would be assured of the firm's viability," he added. *With a report from Ronnel W. Domingo*

Gov't rules out calls for Meralco takeover

By Clarissa S. Batino

WHAT the government did for taipan Lucio Tan it will not do for more than 3.4 million consumers of the Manila Electric Co.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday rejected calls for the government to take over the management and operations of Meralco if the private shareholders led by the Lopez family would be unwilling to proceed with the business.

"A government takeover is not the solution," he said. "It does not solve the problem and goes against the grain of our policy to privatize crucial services."

Camacho opposed even the government takeover of Philippine Airlines that President Macapagal-Arroyo raised some months back, although he led the government team that signed a memorandum of agreement with Tan in May for the joint rehabilitation of the Philippine National Bank.

The government agreed to convert part of PNB's P25-billion emergency borrowings from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. to equity, payment of debts to PNB, and long-term loans.

As a result, the state holdings in PNB rose to 45 percent from 16 percent while Tan's equity decreased from 67 percent to 45 percent.

Some quarters have suggested a government takeover of Meralco to ensure that consumers would benefit from the Supreme Court ruling last week that the firm roll back its rates by an average of 16.7 centavos per kilowatt hour and refund consumers about P28 billion collected since 1994.

Camacho said the tribunal's ruling would prevent the government from selling a 10-percent stake in Meralco with share prices plunging in the last few days.

The government has estimated that the stake earlier worth about P4 billion would be worth only a little over P1 billion now.

"It goes without saying that we can't sell the Meralco shares now. It would be very impractical. Even if we want to sell, we can't," Camacho said.

He said the government would instead help Meralco remain viable even when the Supreme Court decision becomes final and executory.

"We would have to participate in ensuring that Meralco remains viable because the government is a substantial shareholder of that company," he said.

Dismiss Meralco petition for rate hike, ERC urged

From page A1

Alyansang Makabayan, National Association of Electricity Consumers for Reforms (Nasecore), Consumers Union and the Public Interest Lawyers Center backed the OSG's twin moves.

Asked whether Meralco's petition for unbundled rates treated income tax as operating expense, acting ERC Chair Leticia Ibay said "yes."

But she said the ERC would not regard income tax as operating expense following its predecessor's (Energy Regulatory Board) decision in 1998, unless the Supreme Court decided otherwise.

The ERC gave Meralco five days to respond to the OSG's motion. Ibay said that the ERC had also decided to continue its hearings on the Meralco petition as the Supreme Court decision was not yet final and executory. Meralco is appealing the high court's decision.

Meralco refund

As the ERC hearings were going on, various groups continued their debate on how Meralco should refund its overbilled customers.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said the refund ordered by the Supreme Court could cost the company P8 billion to P28 billion. Outraged militant and consumers' groups insist Meralco owes its customers at least P28 billion in rebate.

Nasecore president Pete Ilagan called for an immediate, lump sum refund to Meralco's residential customers.

"We could not accept any other means of refund," Ilagan said. "Commercial and industrial customers should also not be given any refund since their electricity expenses are passed on to consumers."

He said that the total amount of refund should be used to fund consumer-owned and -controlled electric cooperatives that would replace Meralco.

"Meralco's franchises should be recalled, especially those covering areas that were not part of its market before the government took over the firm in martial law," he said.

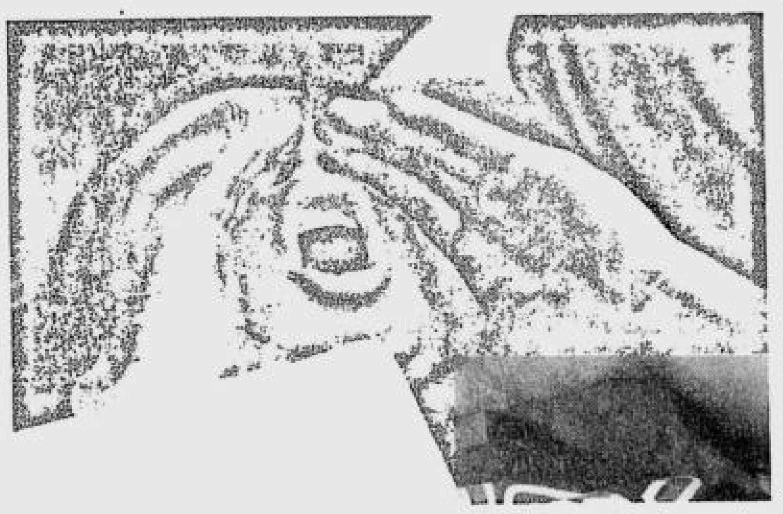
The consumer welfare advocate said that Meralco's franchise was expanded when the Lopezes sold out in the 1970s, but that enlarged market was returned to them after People Power in 1986.

"They got back a more valuable company without working for it," Ilagan said. "The Lopezes benefited from their closeness to (former President Corazon Aquino.)

Following the Supreme Court ruling, Sen. Joker Arroyo strongly recommended that Meralco should be given a "mega-franchise."

Convertible to stocks

But the Freedom From Debt Coalition, a think tank based in the University of the Philippines, said the P28-billion refund to consumers should be converted into equity in Meralco.


"REFUND consumers" is the clarion call of a protester during a rally headed by Bayan-NCR and Anakbayan in front of the Meralco headquarters in Ortigas, Pasig City on Wednesday. JOAN BONDOC

Such a conversion would result in consumers owning 60 percent of Meralco, according to FDC that is opposing a government bailout of the troubled Lopez firm.

A government bailout would worsen the government's fiscal standing and benefit only the Lopez family that owned 16 percent of Meralco. The government controls 24 percent of Meralco.

"Consumers should take this opportunity to assert what is only rightfully theirs, the power to have a say over the management and fate of the distribution utility," said FDC president Ana Marie Nemenzo.

Nemenzo said the P28-billion refund might be converted into a common stock, with either the Government Service Insurance System or Social Security System serving as custodians of the trust fund. She said consumers would be entitled to seven seats in the Meralco board if the P28 billion would be converted into shares.

According to FDC estimates, a government bailout would prove costly to the government, but the proposal to convert the P28-billion refund into consumer stocks would not require any cash outlay.

"Taxpayers are already guarantors to $215 million of Meralco's debts. We cannot afford to shell out more money to bail out Meralco," said Wilson Fortaleza, FDC vice president.

PDI Libre, an instant hit, is one year old

From page A1

has muscled into the crowded local media scene while reinventing the concept of the tabloid newspaper.

Reemphasizing the company's goal of reviving the reading habit among the general public, PDI president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez hailed Libre as a worthy public service that needs to be sustained.

She thanked advertisers and the readers for their continued support.

"We hope to serve you better in the coming years," Ms Prieto-Romualdez said.

As a sign of Libre's considerable reach, research firm AMI said the newspaper now ranked second among tabloids in name recall, garnering 11 percent in a recent survey.

This means that one in every 10 people think of Libre when asked what newspaper they read—a big feat for a freesheet that is only a year old.

The newspaper is distributed in most MRT and LRT stations, as well as in WG&A Super Ferries, and read in offices and homes in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

Libre has a pass-on readership of more than 600,000, according to the same AMI survey.

Dave Valdes, PDI senior vice president for corporate services, said there were plans to distribute copies of Libre in bus stations next year.

Since its launch on Nov. 19, 2001, Libre has won two Gold Quill awards. It also gained a nomination for the "Best Feature Story" category in this year's Catholic Mass Media Awards. *Luige A. del Puerto*

Church to mount . . .

From page A1

explain to the public, including his alleged human rights violations during the Marcos dictatorship and his alleged participation in the Kuratong Baleleng rubout.

"There was also his role in the corrupt Estrada government, which we had ousted, and his unexplained US bank account," Maza said.

The Gabriela leader also said that there was nothing surprising about Lacson's defiance of the Catholic Church's "pro-life" stance.

"Lacson never had the Church's support in the first place, so there's really no love lost between them," Maza said.

To mount strong-opposition

In promoting the use of condoms, birth control pills and other contraceptive methods, Lacson said a leader must be "concerned with the 80 million Filipinos, not a particular group."

Bacani said that the Church, along with millions of the Catholic faithful, would not take kindly to the Lacson position. He said they are ready to mount a strong opposition to Lacson's pro-contraception platform.

"But do not look at the bishops, first of all, look at the ordinary Catholic faithful. Their loyalty is strong, so when the Church talks, many of them will follow."

About 85 percent of the country's population are Catholics.

But Bacani also assured that the church will not ram its views on birth control down the throats of Catholics who take a contrary stand.

GMA faithful to church

President Macapagal-Arroyo has largely followed the wishes of the Church which had helped oust President Joseph Estrada and supported her ascent to power. Her administration has shelved any aggressive campaign to promote the use and the availability of birth control pills, condoms and other artificial means of birth control.

Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin has earlier pointed to the use of these contraceptives as among the forms of "subtle attacks" on the integrity and unity of the Filipino family.

Vendors decry GMA bias for Lopezes

From page A1

that while she had exhibited indifference to their plight, President Macapagal-Arroyo appeared to be bending over backward to help the owners of the Manila Electric Co.

Bacani joined officials of the urban poor group Koalisyon Kontra Demolisyon (KKD) at a press briefing yesterday where they assailed the alleged repressive policies of both the President and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

At the briefing held at the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines office in Intramuros, Manila, Bacani said it did not escape the observation of street vendors that Ms Macapagal was being overly concerned about the Lopezes' financial health.

"If the President said everything will be done to save Meralco, the question now is: Why is not the same thing said to the urban poor?" he said.

And in answer to the question of what the Lopezes had that the poor did not have, Bacani said: "They have money, they have power."

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan also thinks that the President is coddling what it describes as "the certified biggest thief in the power industry."

"If there's anyone who should be saved, it is not Meralco, which is No. 1 in terms of sales among all Philippine companies and whose owners are among the richest clans in the country," said Bayan spokesperson Renato Reyes Jr. "It is the public which has been victimized for eight long years now."

Reyes added that the so-called "strong republic" appeared to be "strong only in protecting abusive monopolies like Meralco" and "denies mercy and justice to a public long suffering from exorbitant electricity rates and such onerous charges as the purchased power adjustment (PPA)."

The President met with Meralco executives on Friday, hours after the Supreme Court ruled that the power firm should refund the P28.15 billion that it had overcharged consumers since 1994. She reportedly assured them of the government's full support.

DEMOLISYON
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BISHOP Teodoro Bacani: Don't just look at the bishops but the faithful who are loyal to the church. They are not going to take Lacson's position on contraceptives sitting down. ERIK ARAZAS

Not pro-poor

But Bishop Bacani said the Macapagal administration's posture showed that it did not actually care for the poor.

"In other words, the newspaper banners say that the government is pro-poor, but this is not true in reality," he said.

Bacani also said that while the Church was generally not opposed to the idea of clearing the sidewalks, its position was that the vendors should be treated humanely and that local governments should relocate them to decent places where they could ply their trade.

"(The vendors) are not things but people, and people should always be handled with care when you are in authority," he said. "This is what (authorities) forget. For the sake of efficiency, we lose the humanity."

Asked about his views on the high court's ruling on Meralco, Bacani said: "It is just right that Meralco return to consumers what it got from them. Whether intentional or not, this was cheating, people were fooled."

Mother of Perpetual Help

Fernando Hicap, chair of the militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, said the administration was trying to push a "win-win" formula that would cater to the "narrow interest" of both Ms Macapagal and the Lopezes.

Hicap said the President was after the Lopez billions to boost her supposed campaign kitty for 2004. "She has openly presented herself as the Mother of Perpetual Help and Queen of Salvation to save the Lopezes' ill-acquired billions," he said.

Bayan's Reyes said the President's "passionate defense" of Meralco "only proves how flawed and anti-people the policies of this government are."

He listed Meralco's "crimes" against the public:

- Its still unreviewed contracts with its sister-companies that sell power at prices higher than that of the National Power Corp.
- Its collection of the PPA until June 2002 without the approval of the Energy Regulatory Commission and its failure to refund these "unauthorized" collections.
- Its overcharge of P29.3 billion since 1994, as computed by Agham, a group of activist scientists.

"This list of crimes by Meralco should compel the government to review its policy of favoring privatization and private groups in the administration and ownership of strategic utilities and industries like power, water and oil," Reyes said.

He said the government should mull over its option to strictly regulate, if not totally take over, the power firm.

He also announced that consumer, labor and other cause-oriented groups allied with Bayan would hold nationwide protests on Nov. 30 to press Meralco to immediately refund consumers. *With a report from Gerald G. Lacuarta*

PSTC'S TANKER ACQUISITION ENHANCES ITS VALUE FOR EVENTUAL PRIVATIZATION

Reply to the open letter addressed by PHILPESTA to President GMA
18 November 2002, The Philippine Daily Inquirer

PNOC Shipping & Transport Corporation (PSTC) wishes to clarify the concerns raised by the Philippine Petroleum Sea Transport Association, Inc. (PHILPESTA), an organization of 15 tanker operators (not 18 as claimed), that has been demanding for PSTC's privatization and branding its bidding for acquisition of tankers as illegal and dubious.

PSTC, is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Philippine National Oil Company, that engages in the hauling of the oil companies petroleum finished products. Its participation in the business has been guided by the greater national interest, with its bottoms serving areas of conflict and regions where higher security prevails.

Nothing illegal, dubious nor anomalous in PSTC's biddings for replacement tankers

PHILPESTA decries the alleged illegality of the bidding for the time-charter of one tanker and the purchase of another by the PSTC.

It is in the charter of PSTC to engage in tankering business. Thus, replacement of old tankers is a normal business program.

PSTC's biddings are legal, transparent and above board.

- ➢ The planned chartering and purchase of vessels have been duly approved by PSTC and PNOC Boards;
- ➢ The procedures comply with Executive Order No. 40 and its Implementing Rules & Regulations;
- ➢ Newspaper advertisements for the tanker purchase were posted in the Philippine Daily Inquirer and Philippine Star on June 6 & 8, 2002.
- ➢ Seventeen (17) prospective Bidders secured the Bid Documents and attended the Pre-bid Conference last June 20, 2002. The opening of bids on July 1, 2002 was cancelled as directed by higher management.
- ➢ PSTC sent invitations to more than 30 local and international ship owners, brokers & agents for the November 8 & 11 bidding and to 42 for the outright purchase scheduled on November 18 & 19, 2002; and posted the same at the website for Government Electronic Procurement System at the Department of Budget & Management.
- ➢ The Terms of Reference are based on the requirements set by the oil companies for their transshipment of petroleum products.
- ➢ While the Charter-hire is based on US Dollars, PSTC's experience for chartering in the last 10 years has proven this mode profitable, contrary to PHILPESTA's claim as highly disadvantageous.
- ➢ The bid openings conducted by PSTC for the aforementioned projects were at all times witnessed by the Auditor from the Commission on Audit.
- ➢ The bidding procedures have been discussed and reviewed extensively with the Commission on Audit and PNOC lawyers to ensure compliance with government rules.

Enhancing PSTC value for eventual privatization

The tanker replacement program is consistent with PSTC's corporate responsibility to abide by the demand of oil companies for younger, more efficient and cost-effective bottoms. It is market demand that compelled PSTC to call for bidding. PHILPESTA members know for sure that the oil companies desire for younger ships, and we believe that they are as interested as PSTC to please their own clients.

Of the forty-six (46) coastal tankers serving the oil companies, thirty-three (33) are over ten (10) years old. PHILPESTA members repeatedly offered them but were not preferred in view of the oil companies' consideration for safety and environmental protection. As a temporary measure PSTC considers it its duty to fill in the acute shortage for young vessels if other tanker owners are unwilling to do so;

Any suspicion by PHILPESTA that PSTC is engaged in a conspiracy to expand its fleet to rob its members of their market share is wrong.

PSTC's modest 8% share of coastal trading will never pose a threat to the market served by very few millionaire tanker owners;

Any shipping company is interested in re-fleeting. It is only through this that its value will be enhanced. This will give PSTC's privatization a better chance of success compared with the 1994 & 1997 failure.

The role of PSTC, and we emphasize this for the enlightenment of the Filipino people, is to act as a brake to the excesses that may be committed by a ***"cartel"*** in the trade.

Privatization should not mean destroying PSTC

There is a whale of difference between the rabid insistence of PHILPESTA that the only mode of privatization open for the Philippine government is for it to abandon business and strategic enterprises and allow the private sector to manage them.

This runs in stark contrast to the policy environment that is now evolving in the light of globalization. This policy holds that government must act as a brake to the excesses of the private sector and pursue its participation and the evolving policy of state and private sector cooperation in these sectors.

Apparently, PHILPESTA still maintains its view that the only meaning of privatization is for the PSTC to stay out of coastal trade, selling its assets and leaving the group to dictate market rates.

In truth, it is the fear of PHILPESTA domination that many oil companies fear the most.

Their argument is simple: Once PSTC is out of the picture, the PHILPESTA can have a field day **raising its hauling rates**, which would then be **passed on to consumers.** Columnist Neal H. Cruz, writing in the Philippine Daily Inquirer of January 24, this year, advanced the same argument.

PSTC has no intention of regaining its 80% share of the market but it does not intend either to leave its clients in the cold, abandoning an industry that refuses to modernize in spite of demands made by their very own clients.

As the company has continuously maintained. PSTC will never shirk from its responsibility of serving its clients now and in the future even as it maintains that it abides by the privatization policy pursued by the Arroyo administration.

The company wishes to be eventually privatized; the appropriate time and mode determined by the owner PNOC and not to be demanded by a private group, lest its competitors, after an evaluation of what is most beneficial to the government and to the country.

PNOC SHIPPING & TRANSPORT CORPORATION

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SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ● *Assistant Editor* **Edwin M. Villanueva**

Warriors, Lancers enter Final 4

GAMES SUNDAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
2 p.m.—UE vs UV
4 p.m.—FEU vs UST

By Roy Luarca

THE POINTS came in clusters for University of the East in the second half yesterday as it downed San Sebastian College, 81-65, and gained a semifinals seat in the Champions League 2002 at the Makati Coliseum.

Paul Artadi and Olan Omiping starred in a 10-point blast that pushed the UE Warriors ahead for good, 55-45, midway of the third quarter.

The Warriors, third placers in this year's UAAP, then greeted the fourth quarter with a 10-2 run anchored on Ronald Tubid to finish off the NCAA champion Stags, 71-55, with 7 minutes and 17 seconds left.

Pep Moore, San Sebastian's 6-foot-7 center, asserted his might inside to tow the Stags to within eight points (71-63), but Charles Tan drained a 3 -pointer to quash the rally and assure UE of a slot in the Final Four with early qualifiers Far Eastern University and University of Santo Tomas.

UE is slated to meet University of Visayas at 2 p.m. in Sunday's semifinals, preceding the 4 p.m. FEU-UST tussle.

The UV Lancers, the Cebu collegiate titlist, edged the Las Piñas College Huskies, 72-69, in the other game yesterday.

The Warriors, with Artadi orchestrating the plays, engaged the Stags in a running game and came out steadier, outscoring the Stags in fastbreaks (20-10) and picking up 28 points from their opponents' 25 turnovers.

Artadi finished with 14 points, 3 steals and 6 assists en route to being named the game's best player.

"Waterloo talaga namin pag hindi kami nag-click sa labas. Buti na lang gumanda ang laro sa ilalim at maganda ang simula namin," said UE coach Boyzie Zamar.

Scores:

UE 81—Tubid 16, Artadi 14, Omiping 14, Yap 121, Booker 11, Estrada 4, Tan 3, Masbang 3, Alminario 3, Hubalde 2, Butel 0, Canaleta 0, Labagala 0.

SSC 65—Moore 19, Alfad 11, Coronel; 8, Nadela 5, Uy 5, Najorda 4, Reguerra 3, De Leon 3, Falcasantos 3, Gonzales 2, Vicente 2, Baluyot 0.

Quarters: 21-16, 37-29, 61-53, 81-65.

WELCOAT'S Romel Adducul flicks a shot off the outstretched arm of Cheeseballs-Shark's Ryzal Castro during their PBL Challenge Cup game recently. Looking on is Irvin Sotto (left). Welcoat won, 77-74. VAL HANDUMON

Shark faces another acid test vs Blu

By Dennis U. Eroa

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—John O vs ICTSI-La Salle
5 p.m.—Blu vs Cheeseballs-Shark

CHEESEBALLS-Shark, in dire straits after losing its last three games, faces another acid test when it collides with sister team Blu today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

"This is a crucial game for us," said Cheeseballs-Shark co-team owner Raul Panlilio. Cheeseballs started its campaign by downing Sunkist, but suddenly lost its form in the next three outings.

The Cheeseballs-Blu encounter is set at 5 p.m., after the 3 p.m. tiff between John O and ICTSI-La Salle.

Like Cheeseballs, John O is also courting early exit with its inconsistent form.

Blu isn't going to take a dive against Cheeseballs. The Detergent Kings (2-1) are aiming to join LBC and Montaña in second place by beating their foes.

Aris Dimaunahan, Marlon Legaspi, Lou Gatumbato, Eric de la Cuesta and Mel Latoreno are playing inspired basketball for the Dioceldo Sy-owned franchise.

Cheeseballs' lineup looks formidable with Ryzal Castro and Ervin Sotto manning the middle. But the problem for coach Jing Ruiz is how to check the tendency of his wards to collapse in the homestretch.

Against leader Welcoat (3-0), Cheeseballs let a golden opportunity pass by going scoreless in the final four minutes of play. Last Monday, Cheeseballs lost heavily to Montaña, 76-62, at the Pasig Sports Center.

ICTSI-La Salle (2-2) will get a boost with the return of playmaker Dino Aldeguer from a one-game suspension.

With Aldeguer, the Archers should have no trouble doing their patented half-court set which should force the John O dribblers to lose their patience in defense.

Abalos bowling opening guest

MANDALUYONG Mayor Benhur Abalos Jr. will be guest of honor at the opening of the 28th National Open duckpin bowling championships on Nov. 23 at the Marketplace Bowling Center on Kalentong Street, Mandaluyong.

Mayor Abalos will be introduced by Vice Mayor Jesse Cruz. The two top Mandaluyong officials will make the ceremonial roll at 6 p.m. together with PHDBC president Inez G. Magbual, Nanding de Castro, Dominic "Essec" Balente, Emma Dinglasan, Remy Princesa and Leah Sunio.

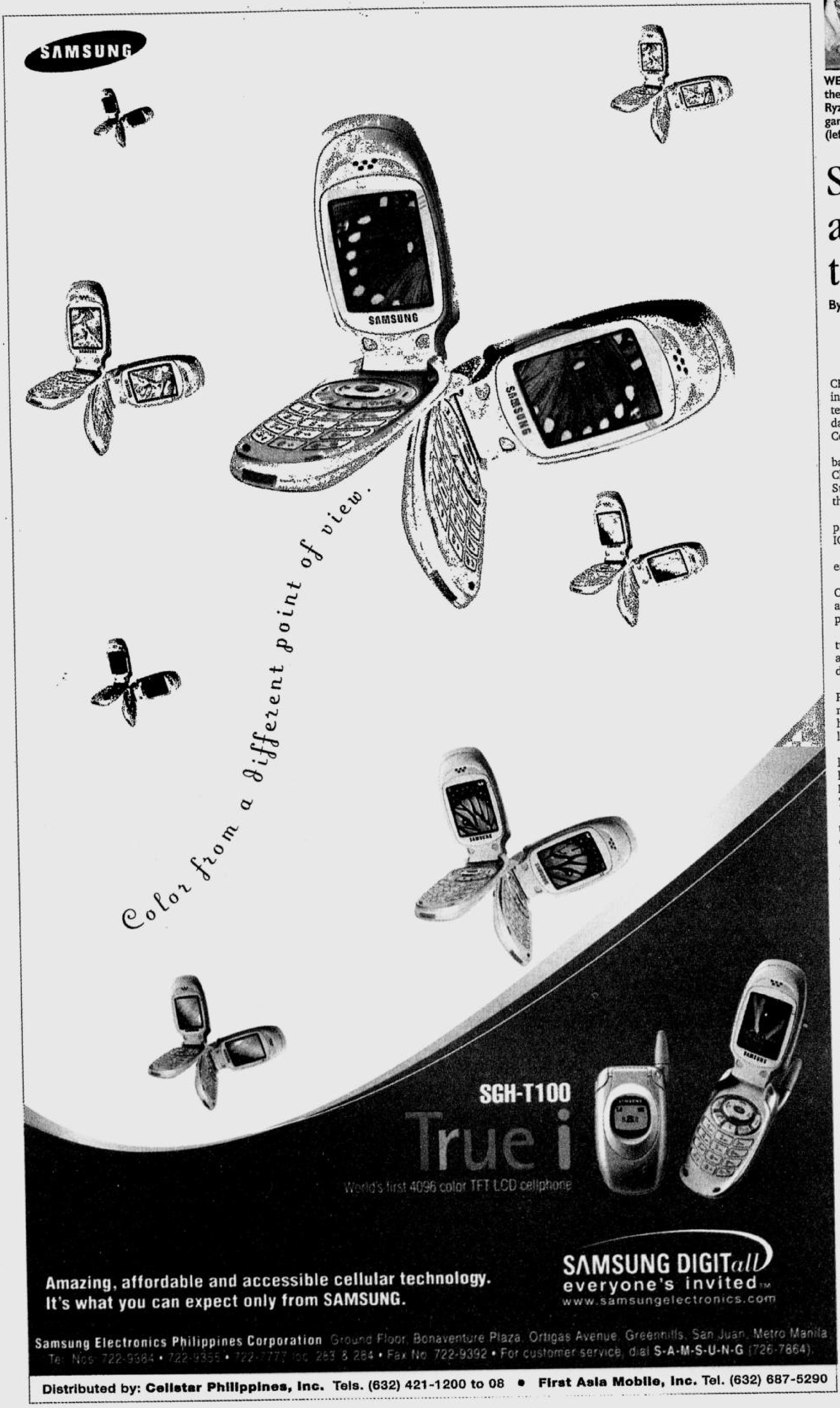
Gift certificates worth P350,000 will be up for grabs in the team and singles (A/B and C) events for men and ladies and mixed doubles.

Major awards are P40,000 and P35,000 for the men's and ladies' team champions, respectively; P12,000 each for the men's and ladies' singles (A/B) winners, P10,000 each for the men's and ladies singles (class C) titlists and P10,000 for the mixed doubles topnotchers.

There will also be special team and individual prizes, according to Magbual.

Duckpin bowlers from 48 teams in Visayas, Mindanao and NCR (National Capital Region) have already registered. Among these are the teams from Bacolod and Iloilo.

The year-end kegfest will end on Dec. 1.



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EASY VICTORIES

Arcilla, Arevalo gain PCA Open last 8

By Marc Anthony Reyes

TOP seeds Johnny Arcilla and Czarina Mae Arevalo came through with easy victories yesterday to make the quarterfinals of the PCA Open men's and women's singles at the Philippine Columbian Association indoor courts.

But that's just about all the similarities the leading Filipino netters share because while Arevalo is expected to sashay into the semifinals with a lowly regarded opponent, Arcilla will be up against a fearsome Korean in today's quarterfinals.

Arevalo used her first-rate skill and height advantage to pulverize Julie Ann Cadiente, 6-1, 6-0, and set up a quarterfinal match against Petrona Bantay, who eliminated Sommer Bisagas, 6-1, 6-0.

Earlier, Arcilla made a quick work in disposing of Alexander Lazaro, 6-1, 6-1, to get into collision course with fifth-seed Lee Chang-Hoon, a 6-4, 1-6, 6-2, victor over Antonio Sagansay.

``I will be needing more rest because it's going to be a tough match tomorrow," said Arcilla, the defending champion in the Dunlop-Accel tournament which stakes a total cash prize of P400,000.

Third seed Joseph Victorino showed no respect to erstwhile national team stalwart and 1994 titlist Pio Tolentino, who was forced into retirement by a hurting right foot after trailing, 0-6, 0-3.

Victorino thus lined himself up against sixth seed Korean Chung Eui Hyun, who struggled to overcome national team coach Cris Cuarto with a 5-7, 6-3, 6-3 triumph.

Chung, 27, needed two hours and 25 minutes to shrug off Cuarto, but his impressive victory already sent alarming message against the Filipino favorites.

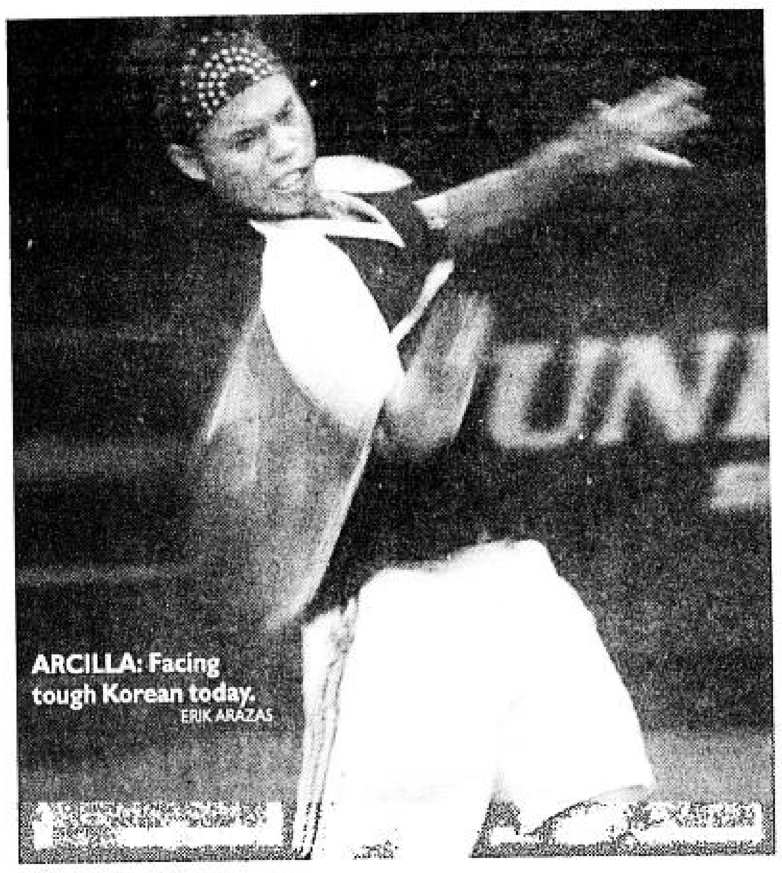
Adelo Abadia also made it to the next round with a masterful 6-3, 6-1, win over Luisito Clores. He will next take on Rolando Ruel Jr. who shocked No. 7 and doubles partner Jesse Lapore, 6-1, 6-1.

LGBA tilt gets under way today

THE LUZON Gamecock Breeders Association (LGBA) Breeder of the Year 2002 winner will be crowned tonight as the 4th LGBA Stag Series 2002 7-Stag Championship Derby gets going at Mandaluyong Coliseum.

A whopping prize of P400,000 from Optimum Property Management Inc. and an elegant trophy await the "Breeder" winner while the runner-up will get P100,000, according to LGBA president Rene "Boy" Diaz.

Rep. Lawrence Wacnang of Kalinga Province (EDL Crowsland Excellence I, 16 points) Blandy Tolentino and Pol Estrellado of Laguna (San Pablo Heat II, 15) and Raffy Campos and Edwin Aranes of Batangas (Red, 15) are locked in a fierce battle for the title, with only one point separating them.



ARCILLA: Facing tough Korean today.
ERIK ARAZAS

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

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Race 2--1. Yes Sir 2. Doña Luisa 3. Vinfa's Pride 4. Cardinal Rule 5. Nagniningning

Race 3--1. Bukambibig 2. Rosa Valentina 3. Front Page

Race 4--1. Real Tough 2. La Signorina 3. Nobel House 4. Millennium Man 5. Cameron

Race 5--1. Something Silver 2. Simply Great 3. Party Princess

Race 6--1. D Minnows 2. Dalia 3. Zero Gravity 4. Mutya ng Nayon 5. Bronte

Race 7--1. Ounce of Gold 2. My Aday 3. Ichiro 4. Bold Lucky

Race 8--1. Lucky Strike 2. Stable Beat 3. Lady Queen 4. Trail Blazer 5. High Typhoon

Race 9--1. Playing With Fire 2. Pay Check 3. Sensational/Bumper to Bumper 4. Cherry Lane 5. Lorna 6. Spectacular Queen

53rd Fil-Am Invt'l all set in Baguio

THE FIL-AM Golf Invitational gets going Dec. 2-7 at the Baguio Country Club and John Hay courses.

Sharing the top spot in the meet's executive committee are honorary chairmen Federico Agcaoili, president of the Baguio Country Club, and Robert John Sobrepeña, chair of the Camp John Hay Golf Club.

Through their leadership, Agcaoili, the golfing lawyer, and Sobrepeña, the golfing business and real estate tycoon, the Fil-Am has gained tremendous success.

Under their leadership, the Fil-Am became the first Philippine sporting event that made it to the Guinness Book of Records as "the world's largest amateur tournament."

The 53rd edition of the golfest has Smart Communications as presenter. College Assurance Plan, Northwest Airlines, Baron Travel, Wilson, Premiere Wines, JPDC, BCDA and San Miguel Corp. are the major sponsors while Bluecross, Caltex and U-Bix Corp. are the other backers.

Baguio Country Club general manager Anthony de Leon and his counterpart at the Camp John Hay Golf Club, Heiner Maulbecker, are the executive committee's co-chairs.

Completing the executive committee are members Alfredo Mendoza, Adrian Pantaleon, Benigno Cabrieto, Robert Legaspi, Luis Sison, Peter Natividad, Mine Anton, Nanette Filler and Salvador Navarrete.

Comprising the tournament committee are chair Taby Tabaniag together with members Jake Ayson, Al Mendoza, Toots Aquino and Butch Brodett.

'Alay' concert gets support

SAMSUNG Electronics Phils. Corp. continues to throw its support behind Philippine sports and is principally backing up the Alay Sa Gintong Medalya: The Thanksgiving Concert set Dec. 18 at the PhilSports Arena (formerly Ultra) in Pasig City.

Samsung Electronics Phils. Corp. president and CEO Sang Yeoul Eom, through Samsung senior marketing manager Jerry Lacson and advertising and promo manager Angie Limbaco, have fortified that support with the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC), the electronics giants' co-presenter for the concert.

The country's medal winners in the Busan 14th Asian Games, led by gold medal winners Mikee Cojuangco Jaworski in equestrian, Paeng Nepomuceno and RJ Bautista in bowling and Django Bustamante and Antonio Lining in billiards, will be feted in the concert, which is a followup to the sendoff cum fundraiser on Aug. 9 also at the PhilSports.

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NBA ROUNDUP

Mavs rip Lakers for 11-0 card

DALLAS–Steve Nash had 21 points and Dirk Nowitzki scored seven of his 18 during a game-breaking run in the second quarter that sent the Mavericks past the Los Angeles Lakers, 98-72, in the NBA Tuesday.

Dallas improved to 11-0 and matched the longest winning streak in its 23 seasons.

Adding to the achievement, the Mavericks beat the Lakers for just the fifth time in 46 meetings since 1991 with their most lopsided victory ever over Los Angeles.

Los Angeles set a franchise-low by making only 30.8 percent of its shots, 28-of-91. That also was the lowest percentage ever by a Mavericks opponent. The Lakers have lost two straight, six of seven and four in a row on the road.

Hornets 99, 76ers 98

In New Orleans, David Wesley grabbed a last-second rebound in the lane and tossed it in as time expired.

The putback came after Jamal Mashburn, who scored 37, tried to win the game with a turnaround jumper.

Allen Iverson nearly handed New Orleans its first home loss with a game-high 38 points and seven assists, but he missed a jump shot from the top of the key in the final minute that could have put Philadelphia up by three with 5.2 seconds left.

Baron Davis had 21 points for New Orleans, while P.J. Brown had 15 points and 16 rebounds. Wesley finished with only six points but was mobbed by teammates at midcourt after the game-winner that sent a sellout crowd into a frenzy and the referees to video replay to confirm the score.

Wolves 110, Grizzlies 106

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 34 points and 22 rebounds as Minnesota denied Memphis its first win.

The Grizzlies, now 0-11 overall and 0-3 under Hubie Brown, lost in overtime for the second time this year.

Anthony Peeler's 3-pointer with 3:05 to play in overtime gave the Wolves the lead for good, 104-102. The Wolves scored the next four points but needed two free throws from Kendall Gill with 16.7 seconds left to ice it.

Gary Trent added 19 points for Minnesota, and Joe Smith, activated from the injured list before the game, scored all 12 of his points in the second half.

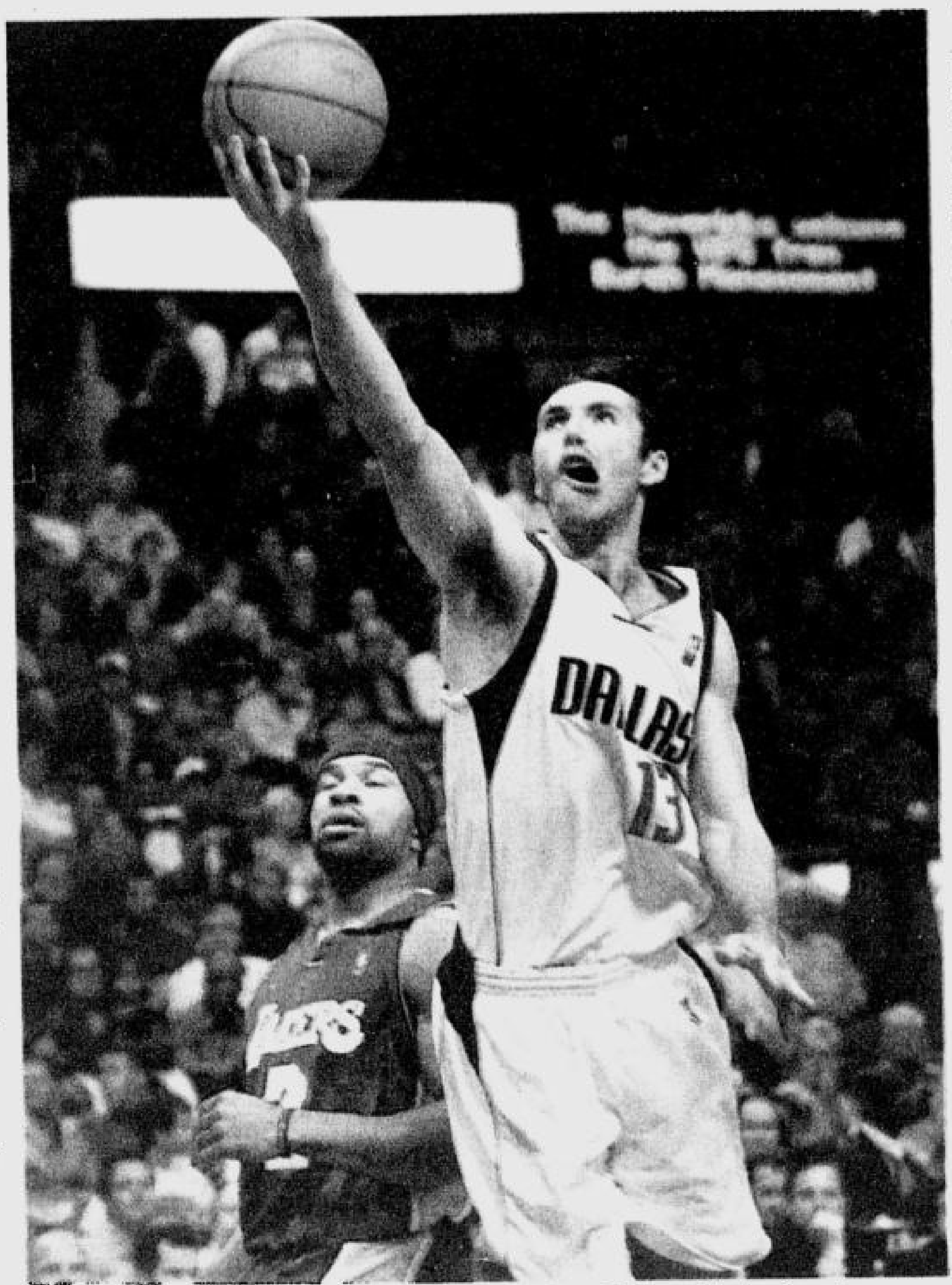
Heat 97, Bucks 93

In Milwaukee, Eddie Jones scored 22 points and rookie Caron Butler had a season-high 20 as Miami beat Milwaukee.

Complete results

Miami 97, Milwaukee 93; Dallas 98, LA Lakers 72; Minnesota 110, Memphis 106 (OT); Utah 99, Phoenix 76; Houston 97, Cleveland 80; New Orleans 99, Philadelphia 98; Sacramento 111, Chicago 98; Orlando 101, Seattle 84.

AFP



DALLAS Maverick Steve Nash (right) lays up against Derek Fisher of the Los Angeles Lakers.

AFP

Paragua, 6 other Pinoy chessers win

WHERE Mark Paragua goes, Team Philippines goes in the World Youth Chess Championships 2002.

Paragua bested Ukraine's Anton Sitnikov in the boys' 18-under category and the six other Filipino bets followed suit by dumping their respective opponents in the sixth round of the tournament being held in Heraklio, Crete, Greece.

It was a strong recovery for the Filipinos, especially Paragua, after none of them emerged victorious in the fifth round.

Paragua raised his total to 4.5 points and boosted his bid for a second grandmaster result. The Bled Olympian was a point behind Hungarian pacesetter GM Ferenc. Berkes, but is ahead of top seeded GM Xiangzhi Bo of China, who has 4 points.

National master Roderick Nava, the 2002 NCAA MVP and board 2 gold medalist, whipped Bert Michiels of Belgium to climb to 3.5 points in the same division.

Letran's Vicneil Villanueva dumped Belgian Batkborol Bliget and was at 3 points in the under-14 group.

University of the East's Nelson Mariano III picked up his fourth point at the expense of Hungary's Tomas Fodor in the boys' under-12 class.

Loren Brigham Laceste was at 3.5 points in the boys under-10 category following a victory over Albert San Martin of Chile.

In the distaff side, Aices Salvador of UE trounced Molly Morruzi of England for 3 points in the girls' under-12 division.

Cheradee Chardine Camacho of Caba, La Union, gained his second point in the under-10 bracket after licking Armenian Tater Gasparjan.

Paragua, seeded eighth, meets France's Matthieu Cornette in the seventh round while Nava faces Argentine Fide Master Lucas Liascovich.

Delegation head engineer Joseph Dumuk, the Region I coordinator of the National Chess Federation of the Philippines, said the RP contingent now has 24 points out of a possible 42 for a performance rating of 57 percent.

Roy Luarca

76ers battle Grizzlies; Lakers-Spurs on Solar

HIGH-scoring Allen Iverson leads the Philadelphia 76ers into battle today (Thursday, Nov. 21) against the win-less Memphis Grizzlies, starring last year's NBA Rookie of the Year Pau Gasol, live at 10 a.m. on the Solar Sports Network (Channel 29 on Skycable and Homecable), with a replay at 9:30 p.m.

Meanwhile, the Los Angeles Lakers are hoping to bounce back from a 98-72 walloping from the Dallas Mavericks yesterday. They go up against the San Antonio Spurs and reigning NBA MVP Tim Duncan in the second of the day's NBA double-header at 7 p.m. on IBC-13.

The 6-0 Iverson, the NBA's scoring champion the last two years, has carried the streaking 76ers to three straight wins. The quicksilver guard has averaged 27.0 points/game, which is fourth in the league behind Orlando's Tracy McGrady (32.5 points/game), LA's Kobe Bryant (31.3 points/game) and Houston's Steve Francis (28.1 points/game). Although winless, the Grizzlies have played hard and lost close games, including a 110-106 overtime loss to Minnesota yesterday.

The Lakers shot a franchise-worst 30.8 percent (28-of-91) from the field in their 26-point loss to Dallas. The defending NBA champions are now 3-8 win-loss and have lost four in a row on the road.

They will be hard-pressed to beat the Spurs at the Alamadome, where San Antonio has won four of five games this season.

Ex-gf says Jordan offered her $5M

By Brandon Loomis
AP Writer

JORDAN

CHICAGO--The woman accused of extortion by Michael Jordan responded with her own lawsuit Tuesday, saying he offered her $5 million to keep quiet about their relationship.

Karla Knafel asked the court to force Jordan to pay her the money because he was in breach of contract.

Jordan filed a lawsuit in October, contending he had a relationship with Knafel more than 10 years ago and paid her $250,000 "under threat of publicly exposing that relationship."

Jordan's lawsuit said Knafel tried to extort another $5 million.

On Tuesday, Knafel's lawyer, Michael Hannafan, said: "It was Jordan who initially offered to pay her $5 million in the spring of 1991 for her agreement not to file a public paternity proceeding and for keeping their sexual relationship publicly confidential."

Knafel's lawyer said his client and Jordan had a sexual relationship from 1989 to 1991 in Chicago, Indianapolis and Phoenix. Knafel discovered she was pregnant shortly after being with Jordan in November 1990, Hannafan said.

At that time, she believed the child was Jordan's, he said.

Jordan then offered her $5 million to buy her silence about their relationship and about the child she thought was his, said Hannafan. He said Knafel is not today claiming the child is Jordan's.

Punsalan rules Architects Golf Classic

TRAVELING all the way from Angeles in Pampanga to Sta. Elena Golf Club in Laguna in the early hours of Monday, luck accompanied architect Jose Punsalan, and stayed with him in the fairway. His favorable 43 points in the Modified Stableford system proved the best score for the overall champion honors in the 11th Annual Architects' Golf Classic.

For his part, architect Odet Bongato aced hole 24, winning a trip to Bangkok for two sponsored by Futura Window Decor products.

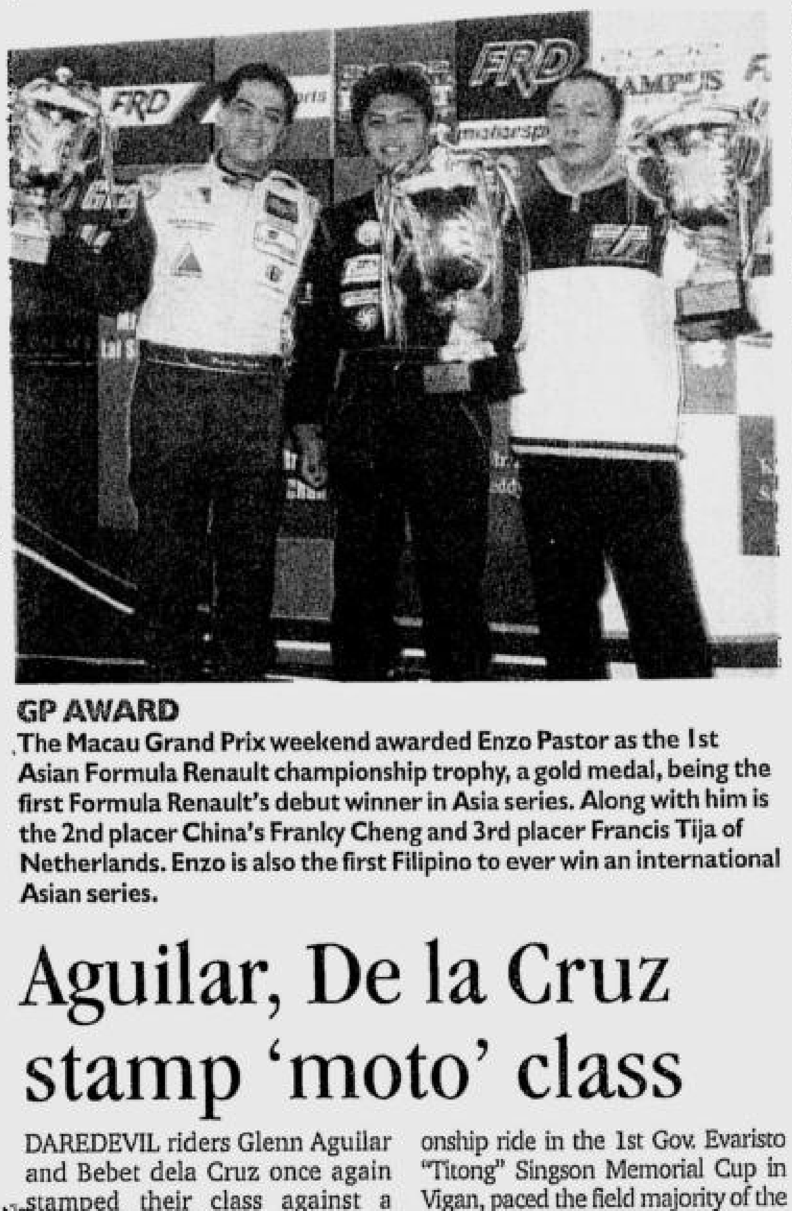
Two hundred seventy-one players trooped to Sta. Elena to participate in the game. Division honors went to architects Ricky Solatorio for Class A; Edwin Gumila for Class B; Randy Banzon for Class A; Raymund Sarmiento for Class D; Marilen Bantug for Ladies' Group; Obet Samson for Sponsors Group; and Tony De Ubago for Guests Group.

Northwoods tilt set

THE ROYAL Northwoods Golf Club, Inc. in Bulacan will stage one of the biggest golf tournaments in the north dubbed as the Northern Luzon Inter-town this weekend (Nov. 23-24) with a total of 160 participants confirmed to see action.

An expanded version of what used to be the Bulacan Inter-town, the Northern Luzon Inter-town has attracted 40 all-amateur squads, mostly coming from Central Luzon and adjoining provinces which will be playing under the four-to-play, three-to-count format.

Club general manager Antonio Pancho said that the teams will be chasing the Best Town award going to the overall champion.



GP AWARD

The Macau Grand Prix weekend awarded Enzo Pastor as the 1st Asian Formula Renault championship trophy, a gold medal, being the first Formula Renault's debut winner in Asia series. Along with him is the 2nd placer China's Franky Cheng and 3rd placer Francis Tija of Netherlands. Enzo is also the first Filipino to ever win an international Asian series.

Aguilar, De la Cruz stamp 'moto' class

DAREDEVIL riders Glenn Aguilar and Bebet dela Cruz once again stamped their class against a powerhouse field as the duo gave Caltex-Revtex-KTM a 1-2 finish in the 1st Diocesan Clergy of Tagum Invitational Motocross before a roaring crowd in Tagum City, Davao del Norte, recently.

Aguilar, who is coming off a third-place finish in the tough KL Supercross and an awesome championship ride in the 1st Gov. Evaristo "Titong" Singson Memorial Cup in Vigan, paced the field majority of the way en route to the win.

Only teammate Dela Cruz was able to give Aguilar a decent fight in the tough one-day race, where the Caltex duo shoved their rivals to the backseat of the race held in cooperation with the provincial government of Davao del Norte, ComVal province, City of Tagum.

No smear campaign, no foul against Noli

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

NOLI Eala sent me a letter yesterday. He said he was "fouled" when the INQUIRER published a report (11/20/02) about an adultery charge filed against him in a Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Tuesday, Nov. 19. Below is his unedited letter in full:

"Dear Al,

"Greetings.

"It deeply saddens,me that a purely personal and private matter landed in your sports pages.

"Yes, I have personal problems. Who hasn't?

"This particular problem, which delves into very sensitive life choices, has been on the past two years, with the parties concerned amicably pursuing mutually agreeable solutions. The parties concerned and I had, in fact strived to resolve this matter quietly and privately in order to protect many innocent lives particularly those of my children and family.

"The timing and massiveness of the distribution of this supposed news item thus comes as a surprise to me. The problem suddenly surfaced as a public issue in the thick of the selection process for the next PBA commissioner. Of course, you are aware that I am among the candidates.

"I'm told by friends in the basketball community that there is an orchestrated effort to smear me. I refuse to believe that such an unsporting gesture could come into play in the sporting world of the PBA. Considering further that I did not personally seek the post being contested, this latest personal attack on me seems unthinkable. But how can I maintain that belief in the face of the fact that a press release of four pages detailing the theretofore very private and personal problem has been circulated to media organizations in such a massive fashion.

"I know who is behind the press release. I let him be if that's his idea of how to play the game.

"Happily, the media generally saw neither merit nor news value in the story.

"I respect the judgement of some editors that story is worthy to print. However, I would appeal for more prudence in news valuation especially on very personal matters.

"Rest assured that even as I'm fouled, I will continue striving to be fair and sporting in my service to basketball.

"Wish you and yours well."

■

Just for the record.

The story was written by our Agnes E. Donato, who covers Quezon City Hall. In her story, Agnes said the adultery raps against Noli was filed by Joselano Guevarra, the husband of Noli's alleged live-in partner, Irene Moje. Noli bore Irene a child last February, Agnes said in her report based on Guevarra's complaint.

Even before I got hold of a copy of Agnes' report, I made efforts to get in touch with Noli. I talked to Noli twice on the phone. His reaction to the report was incorporated in the story–unedited.

If Noli feels that there is an orchestrated effort to "smear" his name in light of his being a candidate for commissioner of the Philippine Basketball Association, that is his opinion.

I must assure Noli and the reading public, though, that the INQUIRER will never be a part of such dastardly act–if ever there is one. The story was printed based on facts. I refuse to accept Noli's line about an "orchestrated" attempt to smear his name. It may have escaped Noli's attention but the case against him--as per Agnes' report–was filed on Tuesday, Nov. 19, and the story was written that same day by Agnes. The INQUIRER never received what Noli alleged was "a press release of four pages detailing ..." Agnes had a legitimate story that was aching to be published based on court records. As a top-notch Viva sportscaster for PBA games, Noli has become a national figure.

Further, let me assure Noli that the INQUIRER will never "foul" him and wishes him well, both in his current battle in the courts and in his bid for the PBA post.

Congratulations to Caltex's Choose-A-Prize 2nd Monthly Draw Winners!

Showcase Winners

Cluster #1	**JOEL PALMARES**	Quezon City
Cluster #2	**REYNALDO TUA**	EPZA Resettlement
Cluster #3	**NELSON CAYABAN**	Mangatarem,Pangasinan
Cluster #4	**RAFAEL MILLAN**	Isabela
Cluster #5	**RODOLFO MARIANO JR.**	Cainta, Rizal
Cluster #6	**JOSEFINO CHUA**	Greenhills, Mandaluyong
Cluster #7	**FERNANDO TORRES**	Moonwalk, Parañaque
Cluster #8	**JUAN JOEL GONZALES**	Tanauan City, Batangas
Cluster #9	**ENRIQUE ALMAZAN**	Cabuyao, Laguna

Nokia 3310 Winners

Cluster #1

Nestor Funtanella	Caloocan City
Clemens Concepcion	Quezon City
Gina Vilandre	Bulacan
Gloria Orense	Nova., Caloocan City
Carlos Bautista	Quezon City
Elsa Pajarillo	Nova., Caloocan City
Rodarose Sison	Quezon City
Fernando Agcaoili	Quezon City
Arnold Banyola	Quezon City
John Rula	Sta. Maria, Bulacan
Elmer Ednilan	SJDM, Bulacan
Moriel Casabuena	SJDM, Bulacan
Ruben Roxas	Quezon City
Jacqueline Del Rosario	Meycauayan, Bulacan
Erlinda Bernardino	Nova, Quezon City
Ardriano Lipardo, Jr.	Nova, Quezon City
Susana Estabaya	San Mateo, Rizal
Rainier Collantes	Caloocan City
Gaspar Lim	Caloocan City
Ma. Victoria Dinoy	Quezon City
Ma.Nena Magalso	Nova, Quezon City
Juanito Sy	Caloocan City
Aldren Rodriguez	San Adres Bukid, Manila
Janet S. Te	Valenzuela City
Felix Mercadera	Taguig
Leslie Javier	Tandang Sora, Q.C.
Joanna Santos	Quezon City
Ricardo Talosig	Baesa, Quezon City
Armando Verendia	Caloocan City
Ma. Gypsy Camo	T. Sora, Quezon City
Myrna Chua	Caloocan City
Marilou Reyes	Quezon City
Nemesio Aranzaso, Jr.	Navotas
Josephine Latina	Meycauayan, Bulacan
Luneta Lubguban	Sta Cruz, Manila
Cesar Chinco	Balara, Quezon City
Joenase Jason	Caloocan City
Lourdes Sinco	Malabon City
Jonathan Sy	Malabon City
Rolina Corres	Malabon City
Danilo Angeles	Caloocan City
Ireneo Gonzales	Malabon City
Henry Merioles	Malabon City
Miguel Batalla	Meycauayan, Bulacan

Cluster #2

Raymund Ocampo	San Fernando, Pampanga
Arnel Ocampo	Magalang, Pampanga
Hector De Leon	San Pedro,San Simon
Regina Cruz	Magalang, Pampanga
Wilfredo Castelo	Bong Gabilya, St. Pandan
Larry Pineda	Phase IV, City Center
Vivian Garcia	Mabalacat, Pampanga
Cesar Guina	Pandan A.C.
Jesus Santos	Porac, Pampanga
Arnel Molino	Bulacan
Marlon De Leon	Balanga, Bataan
Leopoldo Esmedilla	Rizal Ave., EBB
Fides Ovejas	Guagua, Pampanga
Ricky Gonzales	Sta. Rita, Olongapo
Luciano Pangilinan	Minalin, Pampanga
Camille Constantino	San Rafael, Bulacan
Joan Marie Fernandez	San Rafael, Bulacan
Romeo Duco	Meycauayan, Bulacan
Elizabeth Francisco	Boz, Bal
Nina Richie Mateo	Santa Maria, Bulacan
Jimmy Ariel	Balagtas, Bulacan
Jocelyn Reyes Natividaad	Prudential Bank, Marilao Branch
Rhick Mendoza	Mexico, Pampanga
Edgar Pasion	Bitas, Arayat
Daisy Malicelm	Cal City
Alice De Leon	Mexico, Pampanga
Pending Gusco	Floridablanca, Pampanga
Lucy Capule	Orani, Bataan
Rosario Sayeer	Bo. Barretto OE
Albirt Montaleo,	Subic, Zambales
Limeo Pomenten	DBB, Olongapo City
Reborn Baldovino	Mabatang Abu. Bat.
Christopher Ronsairo	Orion, Bataan
Doroteo Roque	Sta. Rita, Olongapo
Quintin Allyos	Zambales
Emmanuel Reyes	Limay, Bataan
Cromwell Saine	Iba, Zambales
Celes Villarosa	San Antonio, Zambales
Rico Abdon	San Felipo, Zambales
Joven Necesito	Agno, Pangasinan
Jerry Valenciano	Guiguinto, Bulacan
Eddie Lopez	Calumpit, Bulacan
Gonzalo Go	Sto. Niño, San Fernando
Oscar Galiceo	Calulut, San Fernando
Bernard Cruz	Tabang, Plaridel
Baby Baliza	Bintog, Bulacan
Arnel Arcega	Apalit, Pampanga
Manuel Reyes	Plaridel, Bulacan
Ana Oristina Magtalas	San Miguel, Bulacan
Lingren Soyasa	Hagonoy, Bulacan
Abundio Ramos	Capas, Tarlac
Josefina Pangan	Apalit, Pampanga
Pablo Lopez Jr	Malolos, Bulacan
Clarence Cardinal	Bocaue, Bulacan
Mauro Bernardo	Malolos, Bulacan
Roderick Bisda	San Vicente, Tarlac
Miguel Macale	Hagonoy, Bulacan

Cluster #3

Henry Yong	Baguio City
George Guennenco	Baguio City
Bobby Bautista	San Carlos, Pangasinan
Oliver De Leon	Baguio City
Ines Bautista	Bakuin, Benguet
Juan Go	SFC
Percival Dumamgeng	Upper Irisan, B.C.
Myrna Barril	Campo Sioco, Baguio City
Cristino Ilarde	La Union
Rolly Bidin	Caba, La Union
Angel Galvez	La Union
Cafeilo Novicio	La Union
Marco Combalicer	Ilocos Norte
Editha Daracan	Santa Barbara, Pangasinan
Ma. Cecilia Misa	Pangasinan
Teofilo Doria	Aguilar, Pangasinan
Ellen Suniga	Pangasinan
Noel Matabia	Pozzorubio, Pangasinan
Emily Jugo	San Fabian, Pangasinan
Jovito Macaraeg	Mapandan, Pangasinan
Arnel De Torres	Villasis, Pangasinan
Dionisio Palaganas	Villasis, Pangasinan
Imelda Macaraeg	Bayambong, Pangasinan
Jennifer Cacap	Villasis, Pangasinan
Rodrigo Millet	Baguio City
Romeo Dela Vega	Tayug, Pangasinan
Jacinto Marcos	Pangasinan
Danny Aficial	Calasiao, Pangasinan
Nenita Dela Cruz	Urdaneta City, Pangasinan
Solid Mktg.	Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Edna Montero	Ilocos Norte
Richard Esteban	Ilocos Norte
Malou Cabanilla	Narvacan, Ilocos Sur
Sar Javilionar	Ilocos Sur
Milagros Sabina	Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Edgar Bartolome	Ilocos Norte
Noli Cabero	Ilocos Sur
Pio Sanchez	Vigan, Ilocos Sur
Fernando Guzman	Cabugao, Ilocos Sur
Fe Abano	Ilocos Sur
Marie Labrador	Vintar, Ilocos Norte
Ronel Manalo	Capas, Tarlac
Floncia Tenedor	Tarlac
Edgar Carro	Tarlac
Edwin Tomas	Tarlac
Rosemary Allantico	Moncada, Tarlac
Julius Carpio	Nueva Ecija
Mario Español	Matatalaib, Tarlac
Virgilio Duey	Camiling, Tarlac
Grace Cuason	Dagupan City
Marietta Espinosa	Tarlac

Cluster #4

Ma. Therese Irangan	Nueva Ecija
Anafe Clemente	San Isidro, N.Ecija
Edison Bondoc	Palayan City
Erwin Ambalina	Guimba, N. Ecija
Majesty Wayne Frances	Nueva Ecija
Rogelio De La Cruz	Nueva Ecija
Lydia Hipolito	Cabanatuan City
Gilbert Medestomas	Nueva Ecija
Amado De Luna Jr.	Baler, Aurora
Salvador Eugenio	Nueva Ecija
Domingo Cajucom	Cabanatuan City
Ismael Galiasa	Nueva Ecija
Leonard Azarcon	Gapan City
Zelzhar Vladimir Aris	Zambales
Marie Buenaventura	Gapan City, Nueva Ecija
Regina Maldo	Tug City
Maximiano Mallonga	Cagayan
Gilbert Medrano	Isabela
Teodulo Martin Jr.	Solano, Nueva Vizcaya
Fatima Soriano	Isabela
Maripaz Verdalero	Ilagan, Isabela
Marilyn Bautista	Alicia Isabela
Roberec Garcia	San Mateo, Isabela
Rogelio "Jojo" Reyes	Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya
Grace Alejander	Isabela
Victorino Dela Guardio	Santiago City
Wilson San Miguel	Cauayan City
Marlon Santos	San Miguel, Isabela
Danny Licupa	Bagabag, Nueva Vizcaya
Demetrio Tumacder	Bonfal Proper Bay, NU
Lourdes Boguador	Lagawe, Ilugao
Domingo Mactal	Polilio, Cabanatuan City
Arnie Osabel	San Isidro, Nueva Ecija
Rodolfo Maniquez	Talavera, Nueva Ecija
Manuel De Vera	EDSA cor. Rotonda, Pasay

Cluster #5

Catherine Vergara	Antipolo City
Gemma Mallari	Antipolo
Rogelio Arriola	Makati City
Elizar Bases	P. Lupa, Las Piñas
Raquel Alviar	North Greenhills, San Juan
Bienvenido Apilado	Quezon City
Ma. Lourdes Talwar	Marikina
Tony Tanchoco	Quezon City
Aurora Farman	Pasig City
Rebecca Cortes	Maybunga, Pasig
Ma. Lea Almirez	Maybunga, Pasig
Leonardo Tioseco	Quezon City
Ruben Maranan	Angono, Rizal
Emilio Melano	Pasig City
Elvira Cuison	Taytay, Rizal
Hayde Faner	Taytay, Rizal
Joey Pelagio	Antipolo
Padilla Raymundo	Pililla, Rizal
Alexander Lagundino	Antipolo
P.J. Ignacio	Marikina
Francisco Omaglang	Cainta, Rizal
Sonia Dela Cruz	San Manuel, Tarlac
Cecille San Buena-ventura	Pasig City
Roberto Legaspi	Pateros, MM
Gerardo Soriano	Brgy. Sta. Lucia, Pasig
Isidro Budiongan	Antipolo
Evangeline Flores	Brgy. San Isidro, Cainta
Lourdes Rodriguez	Marikina City
Jaime Tripoli	San Mateo, Rizal
Nilo Pazo	Cainta, Rizal
Bernie Casinsinan	Pililla, Rizal
Sheila Chatlane	Pasig City
Noel Vallestero	Taytay, Rizal
Hans Christian Chua	Antipolo City
Victor Aborro	Antipolo
V.M. Manzano Jr.	Bin., Rizal
Romulo Muriel	Marikina
Myrna Vista	Tanay Rizal
Helen Hipol	Taytay Rizal
Alberto Manalo	Bin., Rizal
Bernardo San Gabriel	Teresa, Rizal

Cluster #6

Josette Aguire	Quezon City
Jerry Lulu	Blue Bridge, Quezon City
Leo Caldito	Quezon City
Manolito Narag	New Manila, Quezon City
Antonio Valdez	Nangka, Marikina City
Ronel Rivera	Cogeo Village, Antipolo City
Manuel Castro	Quezon City
Ricardo Matudan	Cubao, Quezon City
Joel Yoyo	Bicutan, Taguig
Aurelio Buyan	Mandaluyong City
Ricahard Buen	Sampaloc, Manila
Arnel Roscano	Montalban, Rizal
Eduardo Salontoy	Makati City
Loreta Dayco	Quezon City
Nemelia De Guzman	Quezon City
Jocelyn Yao-Egana	Project 4, Quezon City
Marcial Adona	Apalit, Pampanga
Nelson Enriquez	La Loma, Quezon City
Noly Encado	White Plains, Quezon City
Edna Co	Nagcarlan, Laguna
Tonton Pancipona	Quezon City
Imelda Santos	Project 4, Quezon City
Junior Mendoza	Palan Vilage, Fort Bonifacio
Cheryl Tan Chua	Malate, Manila
Evangeline Espartero	Binondo, Manila
Maureen Soong	Mandaluyong
Manuel Cueto	Sta. Cruz, Manila
Crisanto Almazan Jr.	Sta. Cruz, Manila
Christine Uy	Sta. Cruz, Manila
Larnell Dela Cruz	Lingunan, Valenzuela
Michelle Santos	San Juan, Metro Manila
Ma. Fides De Joya	Sta. Ana, Manila
Esther Del Rosario	Sta. Mesa, Manila
Jaime Malig	Makati City
Johnson Bato	Las Piñas, Parañaque
Zenaida Maranan	Sampaloc, Manila
Ernesto M. Rivera Jr.	Sta. Mesa, Manila
Wesley Tan	Mandaluyong City
Sonia So	Little Baguio, San Juan
Elena Yap	Binondo, Manila
Bernardo Fabian	Sucat, Parañaque City
Alicia Fabico	Sta. Cruz, Manila
Renerio Cabanilt	Tondo, Manila
Bartolome Cobol	Tondo, Manila
Cherichew Gan	Sta. Cruz, Metro Manila
Roy Del Rosario	Tondo, Manila
Rina Falcis	Pandacan, Manila
Alejandro Aquino	Paco, Manila
Julio Agarano	Pandacan, Manila

Cluster #7

Russel Irenea	Pasay City
Amelia Alcala Lopez	Cabuyao, Laguna
Jeffrey Novales	Dasmariñas, Cavite
Iris Ponce De Leon	Parañaque City
Gil Ferry	Makati City
Ardene Hembrador	BF Homes, Las Piñas
Joy Arcenas	San Pedro, Laguna
Irineo Erestain	Pamplona 1, Las Piñas
Precil Mekitpekit	Parañaque City
Joe Alcala	Pamplona, Las Piñas
Norberto David III	Parañaque City
Bonifacio Odicta Jr	VAB, Pasay City
Rogelio Panganiban	Pasay City
Raymundo Munoz	San Pedro, Laguna
Ronald Bandellon	Makati City
William Ulanday	SFDM, Quezon City
Benny Nana	Nuevo, Makati City
Eric Gopilan	East Rembo, Makati City
Kumar Harjani	Bel-Air II, Makati City
Gilbert Alberto	Almanza, Las Piñas
Nerly Beato	Muntinlupa City
Romeo Morillo	Sucat, Muntinlupa
Sarlito Malacura	Payatas B., Quezon City
Danilo Salvador	Sucat, Parañaque
Elegio Condes	Maricaban, Pasay City
Gilbert San Pascual	Marikina
Jocelyn Ferrer	Muntinlupa City
Russel Ramos	Muntinlupa City
Magdalina Aves	Punta Sta. Ana, Manila
Roel Mendoza	Las Piñas
Domingo Tomaquin	Pasay City
Wilfredo Jamito	Tambo, Parañaque
Benny Soriano	VAB, Pasay City
Emiliano San Jose	Pasay City
Geraldine Unabia	Makati City
Eufemio Asuncion	Bagumbayan, Taguig

Cluster #8

Wilfredo Pineda	Batangas City
Nelson Luzon	Imus, Cavite
Edito Geguillan	Lipa City
Fay Ranay	Malabon City
Nadine Andal	Lemery, Batangas
Leilani Umandap	Cavite
Fe Go Pe	Sucat, Parañaque City
Avelino Castillo	Batangas
Rogelio Balot	Dasmariñas, Cavite
Alex Salud	Sto. Tomas, Batangas
Reynaldo Javier	Kawit, Cavite
Josephine Salubre	Dasmariñas, Cavite
Arlene Cruz	Imus, Cavite
Wildenthor Manipol	Silang, Cavite
Olimpio Salcedo	Lipa City, Batangas
Jasmin Mawlion	Malvar, Batangas
Margie Bautista	Imus, Cavite
Lito Morota	Trece Martires City
Roterina Pantaleon	South Biñan, Laguna
Gerardo Valenso	Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Maureen Pucyutan	Sto. Tomas, Batangas
Antonio Canovas	Tanauan, Batangas
Arsinio Castigin	Dalahican, Cavite City
Jimmy Javier	Maragundon, Cavite
Realyn Ricafrente	Tanza, Cavite
Maribel Ocampo	Alangilan, Batangas
Justiniano Videna	Silang, Cavite
Ariel Quilla	Imus, Cavite
Leah Calalo	Lemery, Batangas
Rolando Casanova	Cavite
Roger Maranan	Batangas
Ferdinand Orbase	Lipa City
Annabelle Lazarte	Batangas City
Ernesto Candor	Quezon
Lito Bathan	Lipa City
Rene Marzo	Lipa City

Cluster #9

Raymundo Del Rosario	Biñan, Laguna
L.F.N. Ent.	Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Ricky Alzona	Calamba, Laguna
Ronald Sanchez	Oriental Mindoro
Ricardo Zamora	Angadanam, Isabela
Samuel Alviar	Cabuyao, Laguna
Rico Garcia	Alaminos, Laguna
Santos Gracilla	Maricaban, Pasay City
Antonino Dawa Jr.	Biñan, Laguna
Julia Palermo	Liliw, Laguna
Jennet Malabuyoc	San Pablo City, Laguna
Ernesto Dela Cruz	Gloria Oriental Mindoro
Myrna Arasa	Majayjay, Laguna
Renato Mercado	Los Baños, Laguna
Josefina Ignacio	San Pablo City, Laguna
Ricky Bernandino	Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Pacifico Lazaga	Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Felix Canonse	San Pedro, Laguna
Apolonio De Rama	Pagbilao, Quezon
Junie Nazareno	Gloria, Oriental Mindoro
Tereso Lontoc	Dolores, Quezon
Romeo Joson	Pila, Laguna
Benedicto Elca	Sta. Cruz, Laguna
Jose Capacete	Cabuyao, Laguna
Jose Augusto Salvacion Jr.	Lucena City
Rolando Collado Jr.	Oriental Mindoro
Francis Balagtas	Quezon, Poblacion
Roberto Delos Santos	Bodoctan, Camarines Sur
Florido Bautista	Calauag, Quezon
Marissa Baylon	Biñan, Laguna
Nestor De Guzman	Naujan, Oriental Mindoro
Demetrio Cebildo	Pitogo, Quezon
Bertulfo Danseco	Dalahican, Lucena City
Joelito Canimo	Ilaga Atimonan, Quezon

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Juanito Martinez	Pandacan, Manila
Conrado S. Corres	Malabon City
Crisanto J. Ebarvia	SFDM, Quezon City

Cluster #2

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Rosemarie Bernardo	Sta. Maria, Bulacan
Joselito Salazar	Marivelles, Bataan
Ramon Tobias	Meycauayan, Bulacan
Carmel Manalo	Apalit, Pampanga

Cluster #3

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Rizzalyn Aggao	Pandan LC
Matilde Tacuboy	Cabugao
Jaime Dantes	San Nicolas Tarlac
Amalia Ducat	Cabanatuan City

Cluster #4

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Roderick Perlas	Panacal Vill,Tug Ma.
Teresa De Luna	Baler, Aurora
Edward Ortiz	Isabela
Felicidad Rocas	Cauayan, Isabela

Cluster #5

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Leticia Kuan	Antipolo
Julie Enerio	Caloocan City
Louy Ang	Makati
Terry Rosales	Valle Verde 1, Pasig

Cluster #6

John John Lozano	Dasmariñas, Cavite
Azineth Chua II	Quezon City
Percival Bactol	Sampaloc, Manila
Leo Mar Delos Santos	Quezon City
Joseph Cabrera	Metro Manila

Cluster #7

Constantino Armia	Pasig City
Lorenzo Lejano	Sucat, Parañaque
Ma. Celisa Pavarin	Libis, Quezon City
Joselito Padot	San Pedro, Laguna
Pablito Tequel	Makati City

Cluster #8

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Catalina Clarete	Bauan, Batangas
Amalia Barola	Tagaytay City
Leo Mejia	Nov., Cavite

Cluster #9

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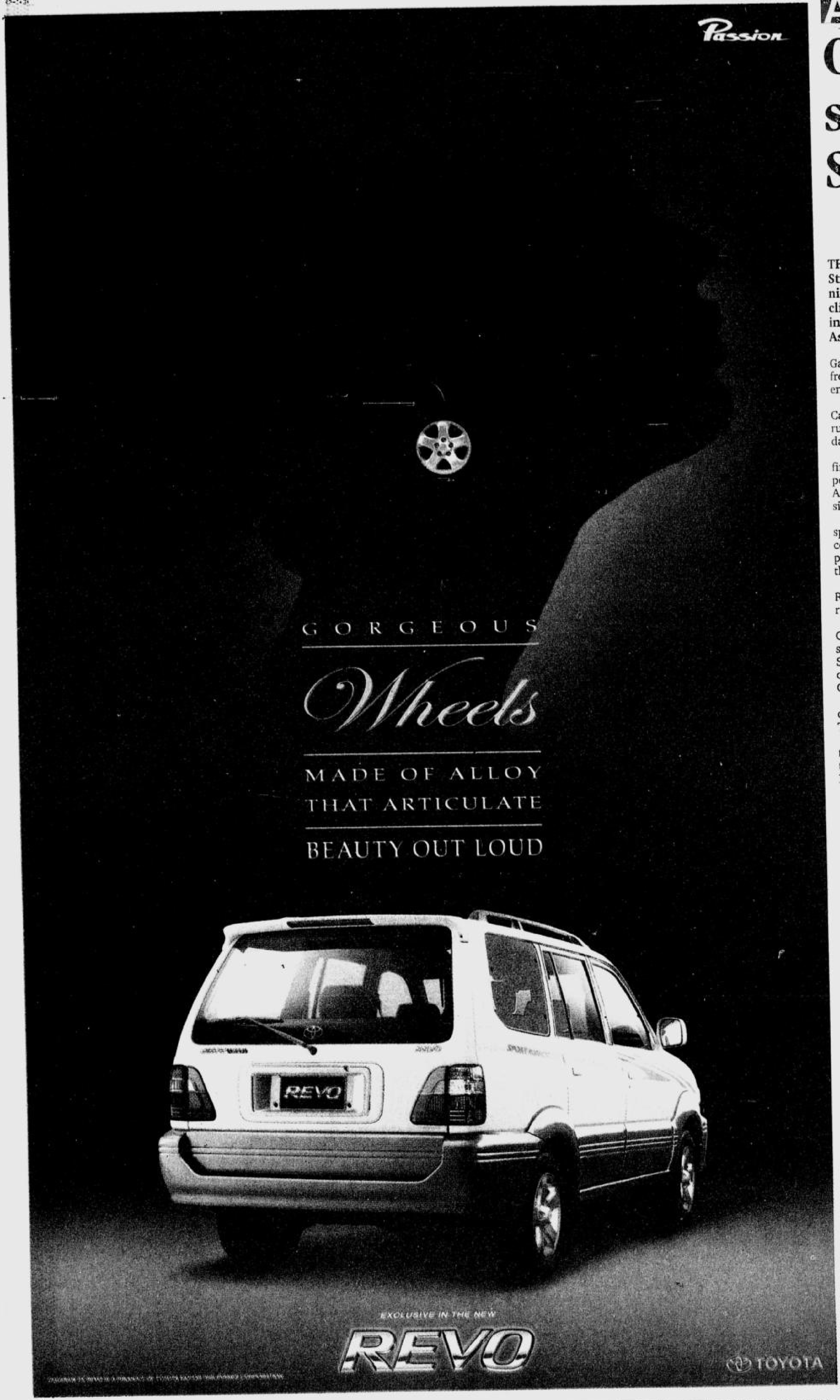


Coca-Cola smothers Sta. Lucia

GAMES TOMORROW *(Philsports Arena)*
5:30 p.m.—Barangay Ginebra vs Alaska
7:30 p.m.—Talk N Text vs San Miguel

THE COCA-COLA Tigers pounded the Sta. Lucia Realtors to submission last night, tallying a 67-53 victory and clinching the first quarterfinals seat in the Selecta All-Filipino Cup at the Astrodome.

Drawing firepower from Busan Asian Games campaigners Rudy Hatfield and Jeffrey Cariaso, the Tigers led in all the quarters en route to their fifth win in seven outings.

Hatfield topscored with 19 points while Cariaso added 18 as the Tigers exploited the rustiness of the Realtors, who came from a 10-day break.

Apart from committing 12 turnovers in the first half alone, the Realtors were also hampered by the inability of their big men–Marlou Aquino and Dennis Espino–to dominate inside.

"We took away their low post game, the spot where we are weakest," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes. "Our double team (inside) paid off again, that's a tribute to the defense this team can play."

It was the fourth loss in seven games for the Realtors, who dropped their bid for an outright quarterfinals seat.

With two games to go in the eliminations, Coca-Cola could even nail a sure semifinals seat with another win, which could come Sunday against sister team and defending champion San Miguel Beer at the Araneta Coliseum.

If they fail to do so, the Tigers get another chance on Nov. 29 when they play the Talk N Text Phone Pals.

Enjoying a 17-12 lead in the first quarter, the Tigers methodically shattered the Realtors' defenses through the inside forays of Hatfield and Cariaso.

Batang Red Bull dumped Purefoods, 96-66, in the nightcap to keep top spot at 5-1. Purefoods fell to 3-4.

Roy Luarca

Scores:

COCA-COLA 67—Hatfield 19, Cariaso 18, Morano 12, Reavis 6, Antonio 5, Juinio 2, Abuda 2, Avenido 2, Abarrientos 1, Bolado 0, Manalo 0.

STA. LUCIA 53—Mendoza 17, Espino 14, Aquino 7, Francisco 7, Tan 4, Ortiguerra 2, Rodriguez 2, Falcasantos 0, Del Rosario 0, Ejercito 0.

Quarters: 17-12, 37-29, 52-43, 67-53.

Don Bosco XI triumphs

TARLAC CITY—Don Bosco Technical Institute toppled San Vicente, 3-1, recently to rule the Tarlac Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football championship at the Tarlac Sports Plaza here.

Alejandro Romero knocked in two goals to spark the DBTI boys' triumph.

With the victory, DBTI earned the right to play the Baguio elimination champion for a place in the Luzon finals.

Romero, who was eventually named the tourney's most valuable player, struck in the seventh and 27th minutes.

The other DBTI scorer was Rafael Espinosa.

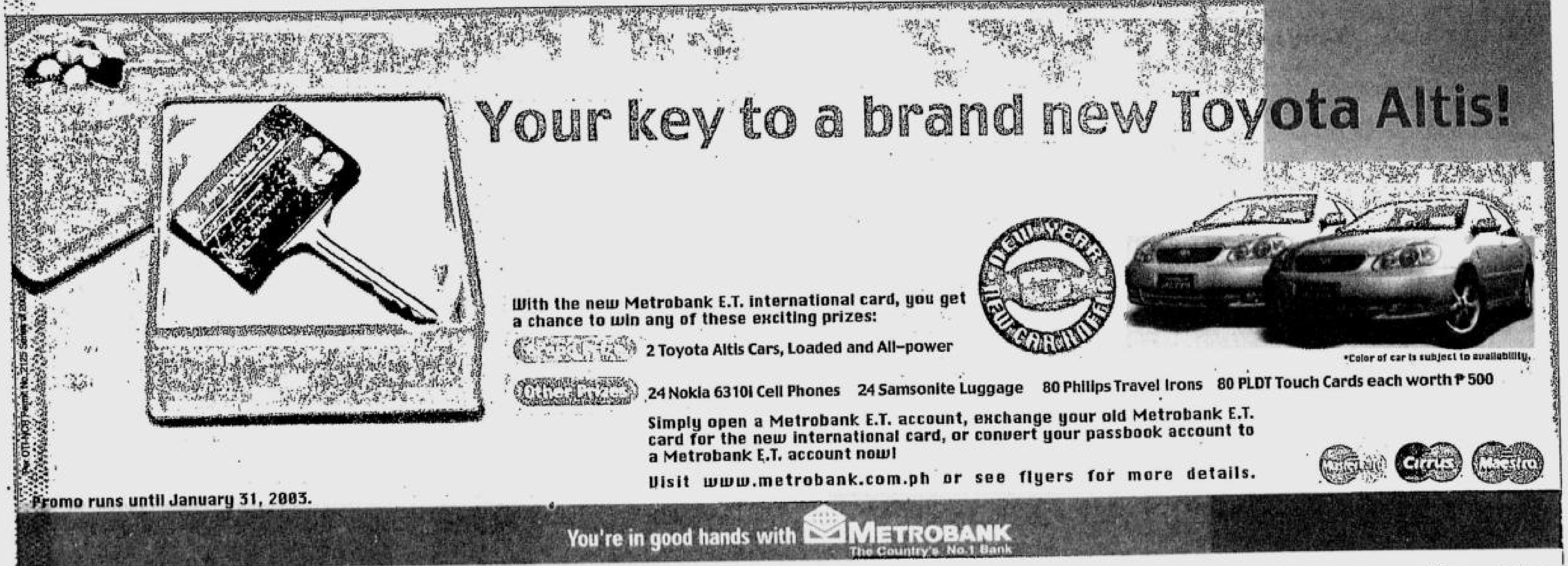
Darwin Romero produced San Vicente's lone marker in the 12th minute.

Amucao High took third spot by nosing out San Manuel High, 4-3, in the other match.

Gil Lusung led Amucao with two goals. The other scorers were Allen Castro and Alexander Rodriguez.

San Miguel's goals were produced by Garry Lusung (two) and Anthony Bulos.

DBTI blanked San Manuel, 3-0, while San Vicente shut out amucao, 2-0, in the semifinals of the tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with adidas as official ball.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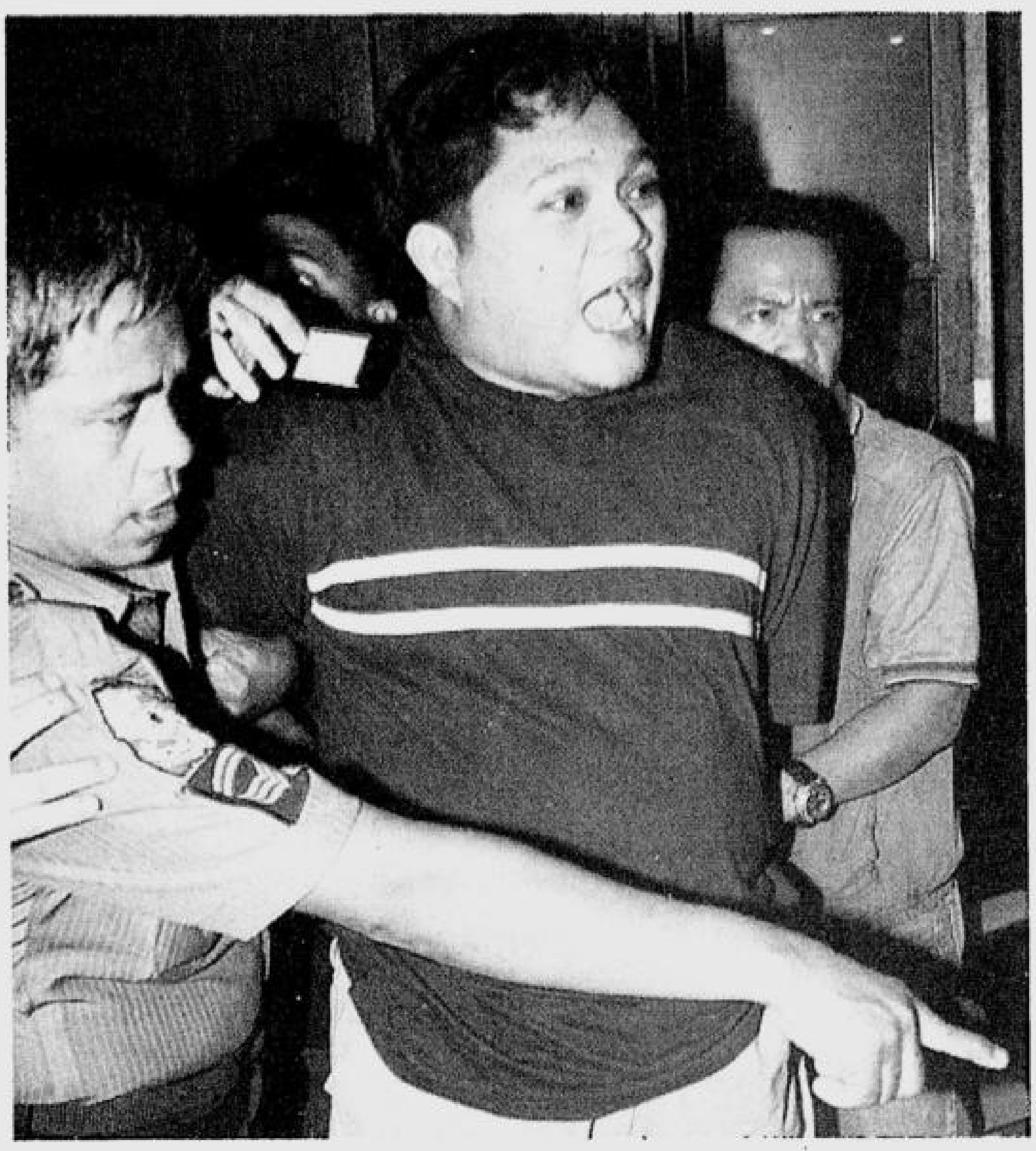
METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

'We were framed'



CRYING that he was framed, police Senior Inspector Loreiman Manrique creates a ruckus at the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group headquarters in Camp Crame.

DENNIS SABANGAN

By TJ Burgonio

TWO POLICEMEN and a civilian were arrested in connection with the alleged abduction of the daughter of actor Rod Navarro and her live-in partner last Nov. 7 in Makati City.

But Senior Insp. Loreiman Manrique of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency; PO1 Froilan Trestiza of the National Capital Region Police Office; and Rodie "Buboy" Pineda yesterday claimed that they were framed when presented to the media at the headquarters of the Criminal and Investigation and Detection Group.

CIDG agents nabbed the suspects in separate operations in Makati on Nov. 17.

Manrique and Pineda, who were both handcuffed, were yelling: "We were framed up; we were framed up."

The CIDG made the arrests following complaints from victims, Maria Irma Navarro, 22, and Lawrence Yu, 21. They claimed that their abductors tried to extort from them some P.5 million days after they were released upon payment of ransom.

Navarro and her live-in partner Yu maintained that their case was simply robbery-extortion or "hulidap." They said the suspects abducted them outside the Where Else Disco in Makati at about 1 a.m. on Nov. 7 and were forced to cough up P300,000 cash and produce P1 million worth of jewelry before they were freed five hours later.

An anti-narcotics agent, Manrique hinted that he and his companions conducted an anti-drug operation on the couple, but did not say if they had seized illegal substances from them. He kept telling reporters that he specialized in the seizure of Ecstasy pills.

CIDG agents found on the suspects the two police officers' service firearms, two 9mm pis-

WE/ A26

Chinese Embassy helps police identify shabu lab suspects

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE CHINESE Embassy has stepped into the investigation of a big-time drug ring that operated a shabu laboratory in Parañaque City.

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District director, yesterday said embassy officials had assured police that they would help establish the identities of at least two Chinese whose names have surfaced in the investigation.

"Hopefully with their help, we can once and for all know the people behind the drug laboratory," he said.

Gutierrez said he and his men had sought the help of the Chinese embassy to unmask the real identities of Xuzi Bin Ong, 30, and Kuan Tian Wei who also went by the name Nuan Tian Wei.

Xuzi was said to be the caretaker of the laboratory that manufactured huge quantities of high-grade shabu inside a mansion owned by businessman Teddy Monasterio at the Executive Heights Village, Barangay Sun Valley.

Kuan's signature appeared in the checks he had issued to Monasterio for the payment of the P70,000 monthly rent of the Sun Valley mansion. He supposedly withdrew each payment from a Binondo bank where he had used the name Nuan Tian Wei to open an account.

Last Monday, Gutierrez said police had met with representatives of the Chinese Embassy to discuss the case. He said embassy officials promised to look into the records of Xuzi and Kuan and establish their identities.

Police yesterday were set to file criminal charges against the two Chinese, Monasterio, and a certain Chi Castro, a real estate broker, according to Gutierrez.

Castro was the one who supposedly hammered out the deal between Monasterio and Kuan for the lease of the Parañaque mansion.

Cinco family asks Comelec not to take back Matibag

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE FIRST death anniversary of Commission on Elections director Velma Cinco turned out to be another period of grief for her family.

The Cinco family yesterday mourned the decision of Manila assistant prosecutor Raymunda Cruz-Apolo dismissing the charges against Cinco's rival at the Comelec Angelina Matibag and her bodyguard Rudolfo Fortich.

"It's so painful for us. It's like my sister died a second death, only it's worse this time," a teary-eyed Marian Jayme told reporters after the Mass held at the Comelec session hall to mark the first death anniversary of Cinco yesterday.

Jayme was with Cinco when the director was gunned down inside her car. Cinco's son Carlo, who was driving, was also shot in the arm.

Not one of the seven commissioners attended the Mass, which gathered about 80 Comelec employees who were mostly friends of the late chief of the Comelec education and information department.

Jayme pleaded with the Comelec to carefully study Matibag's request to be reinstated, saying the clearance given by the Manila prosecutor's of-

CINCO/ A26

Councilor urges Atienza to build school on Mehan

By Jerome Aning

MANILA councilor Ricardo Isip yesterday urged Mayor Lito Atienza to fast track the construction of the City Colleges of Manila at the Mehan Gardens and assert the city's right to implement its own development projects.

The 5th district alderman said the DENR, in revoking the clearance for the CCM project, violated the city's autonomy and negated its right to determine what is right for its residents.

On Monday, environmental groups and politicians came in full force

COUNCILOR/ A26

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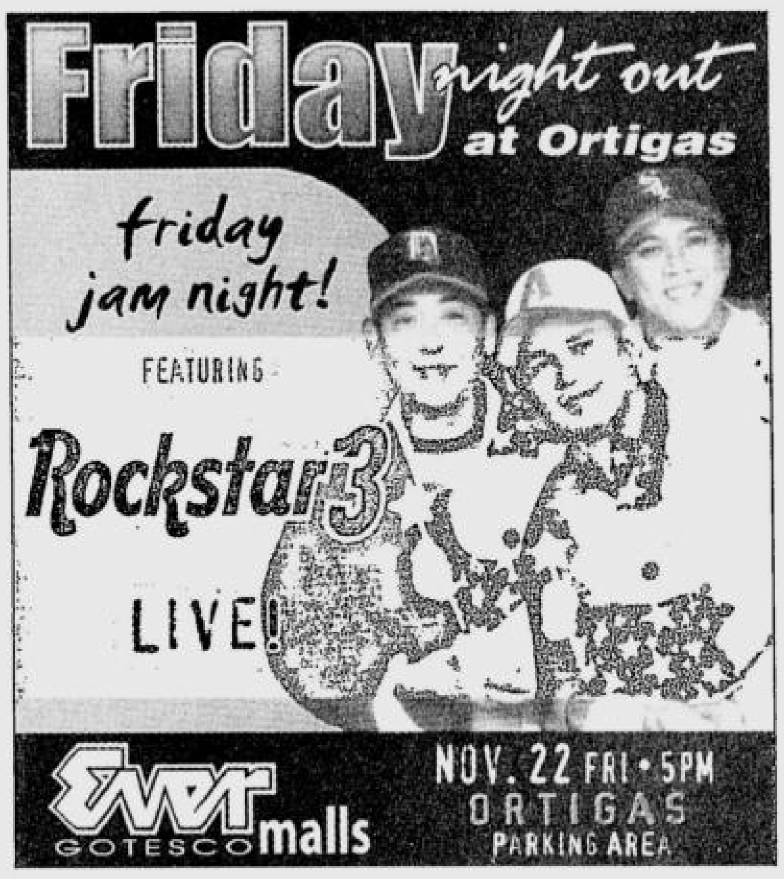

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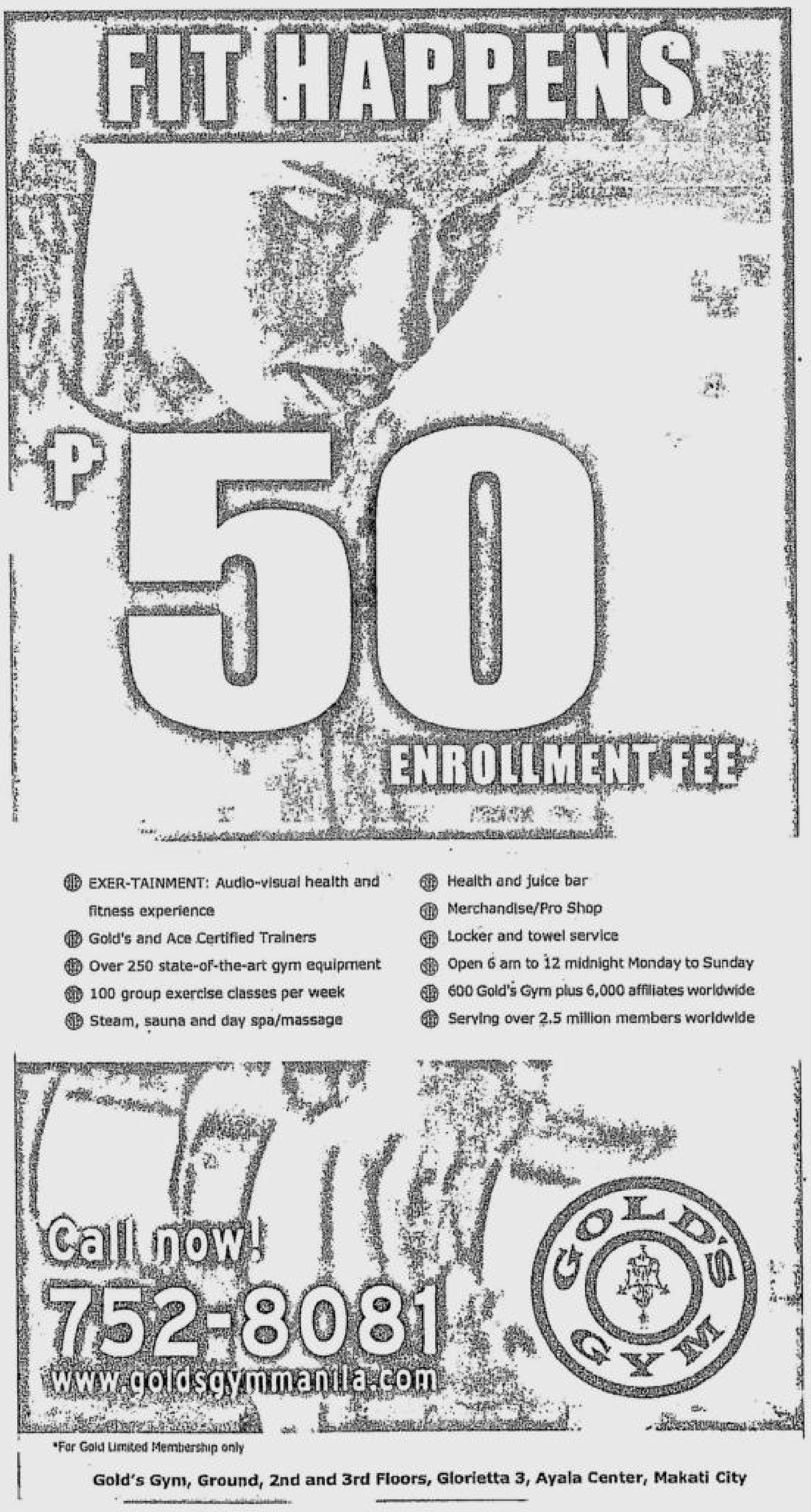

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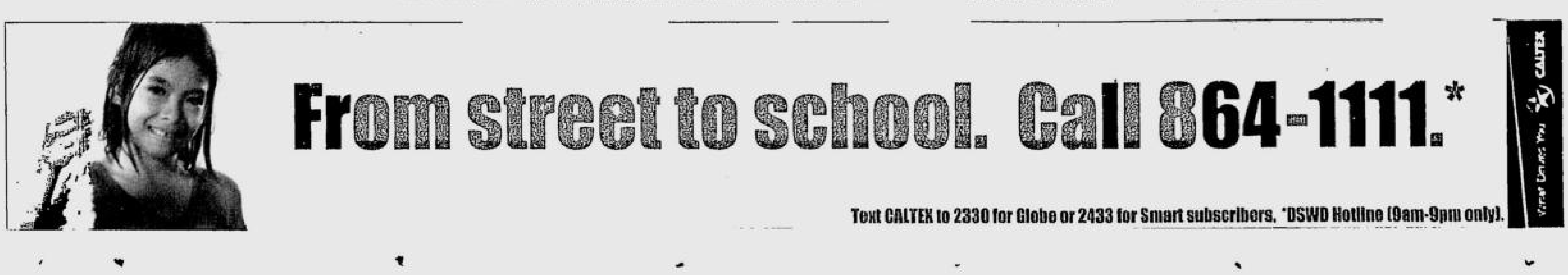
THURSDAY



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Mandaluyong fire injures 2

By Nelson Flores and Philip Tubeza

TWO PERSONS were hurt and more than 2,000 people were rendered homeless when fire broke out in Mandaluyong City early yesterday morning.

Police identified the victims as Venus Marquez, 22, and Rolando Labiano, 35, both residents of A. Luna Street, Barangay Burol, Mandaluyong City.

They sustained minor burns and bruises and were treated at the fire scene.

Marquez and Labiano were hurt while trying to save their personal belongings, the police said.

Investigation showed that the hour-long blaze began at about 2:15 a.m. in a house on A. Luna Street, a densely populated area.

Senior Fire Officer 2 Danny Medina, Mandaluyong City Fire Station desk officer, said the fire quickly spread because the houses in the area were built of light material.

He added that low water pressure and the presence of onlookers made it difficult for firemen to battle the blaze.

Medina added that local barangay officials and policemen were able to control the crowd and prevented looting.

Mayor Benjamin Abalos Jr. has ordered the local social welfare department to immediately assist the fire victims.

The blaze in Mandaluyong came two days after a fire razed an apartment in Sampaloc, Manila.

Arson investigators pegged property damage in Monday night's fire at P7 million.

The blaze gutted a four-story apartment on San Antonio Street, near the National University, in Sampaloc, said a report from the Manila fire department.

Fireman SFO4 Danilo Taluan was injured after he fell from the roof of a burning building.

The fire also damaged a house at the back of the apartment before it was put out.

Arson investigators said the fire began at around 7:38 p.m.

The fire reached fifth alarm before it was brought under control at around 8:25 p.m., according to the report.

Batanes exhibit at Rockwell

EIGHTY framed photographs of timeless scenes and cultural sights of Batanes will be on exhibit and for sale at the Power Plant, Rockwell Center, Makati on Nov. 22 to 28, 2002.

Amateur photographers are Manny Ang, Sonia A. Cruz, Eric Quiason, Fr. Romy Hitosis, Boyet Varias and Orly Punzalan. Last summer, they spent a week to capture on film the way of life of the Ivatans in Batanes.

Proceeds of the exhibit will go to the Batanes Eco-Cultural Tourism Cooperative for its livelihood projects and for the promotion and preservation of the pristine environment, cultural heritage, customs and traditions of the people of Batanes. The exhibit is sponsored by Fuji Film, Asian Spirit Airlines, Rockwell Land Corporation, Window Café and Wells Photo. For inquiries call Manny Ang or Noli Gabilo at 833-8666.

Mother loses daughter, finds her kidnapper

By Philip Tubeza

HOUSEWIFE Nora A. Asis refused to give up her search for her three-year-old daughter, who was kidnapped in Rizal Park on Friday afternoon.

Her tenacity paid off on Tuesday night when she saw the woman who took her daughter Jinky.

Suspect Evelyn dela Cruz, 34, of Sitio Boso-boso, Antipolo City is now facing charges of kidnapping and illegal detention for running away with Jinky, said SP04 Danilo E. Salonga, of the Western Police District-General Assignment Section.

Police said Dela Cruz broke down and admitted to taking Jinky at the police station, but said she took the girl because she wanted a daughter.

Police are also looking into reports that Dela Cruz had sold the girl.

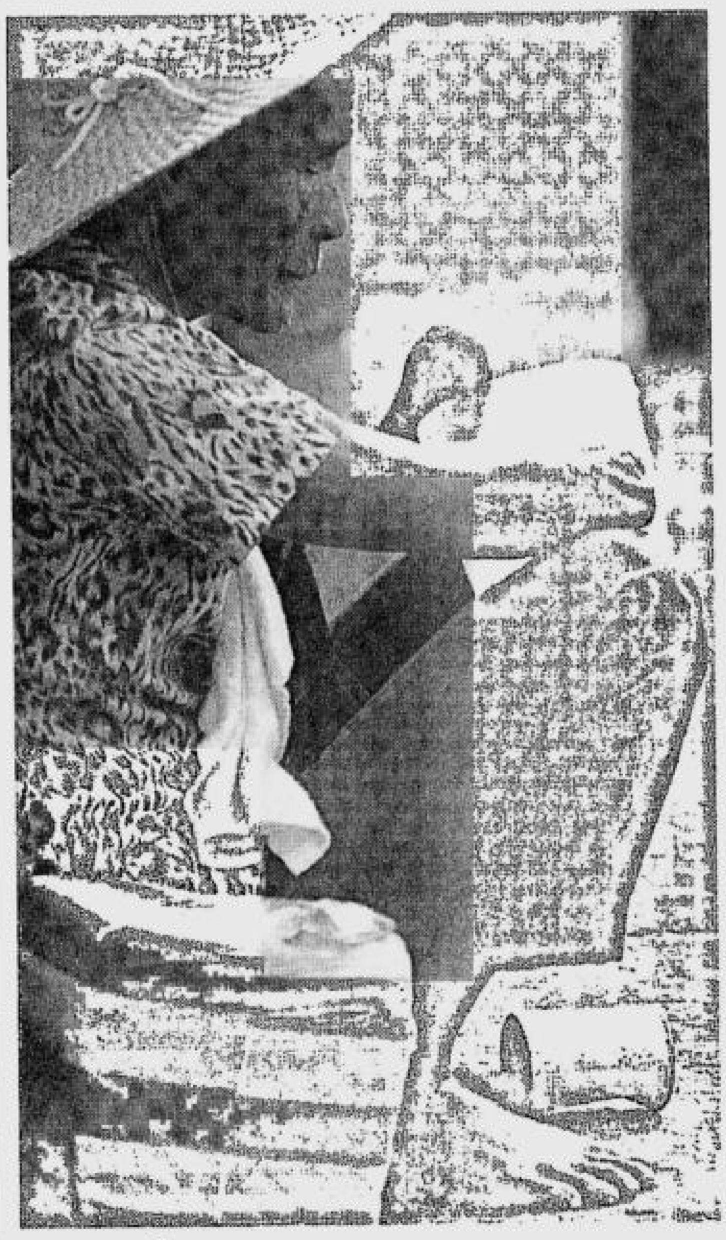
Asis said she was strolling in the park at about 2 p.m. Friday when the Dela Cruz befriended her. She said that when Jinky told her she needed to go to the toilet, Dela Cruz offered to take the girl. The two did not return, Asis said.

She reported the incident to police after she searched the park and could not find Jinky and Dela Cruz. She also continued to look for her daughter.

At about 10 p.m. on Wednesday, Asis saw Dela Cruz walking in the park and immediately asked for help from the park's security guards, who nabbed the suspect.

Dela Cruz was taken to the WPD headquarters where she admitted to taking Jinky. But she denied that she sold the girl, saying that she entrusted Jinky to one Clarita Garcia in Sitio Boso-boso in Antipolo City.

Several Manila policemen yesterday went to Antipolo to get Jinky while Dela Cruz was detained at the WPD-GAS jail.



DEGREE OF PITY
Samuel Johnson might have this blind armless man in mind when he said "an unaccustomed mode of begging excites an unaccustomed degree of pity." The man begs for food on a sidewalk in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Erik Arazas

Suspect in honor student's murder finally identified

By Christian V. Esguerra

POLICEMEN have identified the man suspected of killing Alvin John Valdez, 14, near the boundary of Pasay and Parañaque cities. The 21-year-old male suspect was not named, but according to Insp. Jose Mansalungan of the Pasay Police, he is a known thug in the Kalayaan area in Pasay City.

He said bystanders who witnessed the killing of Valdez, an honor student at the South Merville School, on Tuesday had identified the suspect, but police have yet to arrest him.

Valdez's Mother Peach said her son's killing had paved the way for the development of Kalayaan, particularly the area near the access road leading to Barangay Merville in Parañaque.

"All of a sudden, it became clean," Peach, 41, yesterday told the Inquirer. "There are now a lot of barangay (watchmen) and policemen guarding the area. I just hope (authorities) would be consistent."

The "sudden" improvement at Kalayaan was the immediate result of the memorandum of understanding signed by Mayors Wenceslao Trinidad of Pasay and Joey Marquez of Parañaque last Tuesday. The memorandum called for the development of Kalayaan and the deployment of more policemen and village watchmen there.

During the meeting, the two mayors also agreed to offer a P200,000 reward to anyone who can give information that will lead to the arrest of Valdez's killer.

On Tuesday, neighborhood thugs allegedly stabbed dead Jomar Jelani, 18, near the area where Valdez was shot dead.

Police said Jelani was killed on the access road in Barangay Kalayaan in Pasay that leads to Barangay Merville in Parañaque.

Senior Supt. Oscar Catalan, Pasay police chief, on Tuesday said he would recommend the relief of the Police Community Pecinct commander in Kalayaan.

The city police chief said there were only 13 policemen detailed in the area at the time of the killings.

But Catalan said Jelani's death should not be associated with the killing of Valdez last week. He said Valdez was shot dead while he was riding a tricycle on his way home from a religious service. Jelani, he said, was slain with an ice pick by drinking partners at around 5 a.m. Tuesday, he said.

News about Jelani's killing, however, only fanned the outrage of Merville residents attending a memorial Mass for Valdez at his school Tuesday morning, according to Dante Jimenez, chair of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption.

Manila policeman's widow cries for justice

THE WIDOW of Manila policeman SPO3 Avelino Manalo, who was accused of kidnapping and then ambushed and killed in Tanauan, Batangas on Monday, yesterday sought justice for her slain husband.

Manalo's widow Sylvia, 50, also denied that her husband had kidnapped the two sons of a businesswoman who owes them money.

"I did not recognize my husband when I saw him," she said. "Why did they kill (him)? We're just trying to get back what we owned," she said, while holding back her tears at the Manila police headquarters.

She also said that brothers RJ Velasco, 18, and Mark, 16, were not kidnapped but were only "invited" to their rest house so that the Manalos could contact their mother, Judith. She said Judith owed them P700,000.

"We are not kidnappers," Sylvia said. "I have sold so many things just to keep our family afloat. But not kidnapping."

Police said RJ was kidnapped at the Velasco residence in Sto. Tomas on Nov. 13, and Mark was kidnapped at the Metropolis Mall in Alabang, Muntinlupa.

But Sylvia said the Velasco siblings were free to leave their rest house and that she even washed some of their clothes.

Manalo, who was assigned to the Western Police District mobile patrol unit, was shot 21 times on Monday morning, by three unidentified men on board a silver Honda Civic.

"I want to know who really killed my husband," she said. "We are not kidnappers."

Philip Tubeza

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, November 21, 2002
Presentation of Mary

1st Reading: Zech 2:14-17
Gospel: Mt 12:46-50

While Jesus was still talking to the people, his mother and his brothers wanted to speak to him and they waited outside. So someone said to him, "Your mother and your brothers are just outside; they want to speak with you."

Jesus answered, "Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?"

Then he pointed to his disciples and said, "Look! Here are my mother and my brothers.

Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is for me brother, sister, or mother."

Commentary

Tradition has it that very early in her life, Mary was taken to the Temple of Jerusalem and was educated there. Historically this is hardly tenable. Besides I have never understood the mania of making saints look as a rare species from birth. I prefer to imagine Mary running and playing around in the playgrounds of Galilea together with other boys and girls, having a happy childhood and attending the synagogue on Saturdays with the rest of the children to listen from the lips of the rabbi the beautiful history of her people. There, among her own, with her parents, was surely the place where Mary learned to pray and to be attentive to God's word. There could not be a better place. That is why, when she grew up and matured, she could discover the presence of God not only in the holy actions at the Temple, but also in ordinary life. She understood that her whole life was a sign of the presence of God. That was the best education she could ever have.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (EXEMPTING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Insanity—Insanity must have existed at the time of the commission of the offense, or the accused must have been deranged even prior thereto. Otherwise, he would still be criminally responsible. Verily, his alleged insanity should have pertained to the period prior to or at the precise moment when the criminal act was committed, not at anytime thereafter. When insanity is alleged as a ground for exemption from criminal responsibility, the evidence must refer to the time preceding the act under prosecution or to the very moment of its execution. If the evidence points to insanity subsequent to the commission of the crime, the accused cannot be acquitted. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Panganiban, People v. Robiños, G. R. No. 138453, May 29, 2002]

DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

'We were framed'

From page A25

tols, a police badge, and a Rolex watch and necklace that belonged to the victims.

Navarro also told reporters that the suspects were not framed.

"How could this be a frame-up? I know Buboy; he's my 'kumpare'. He's the godfather of my sister's child," Navarro said.

PDEA executive director Anselmo Avenido said that Manrique had cleared with their unit that he would conduct an operation on Nov. 7, but noted that Navarro had not submitted a post-operation report.

Created in July, the PDEA is the country's new anti-narcotics body, replacing the Narcotics Group (NarcGroup).

Despite their denials, the suspects were charged with kidnapping and illegal possession of firearms before the Makati prosecutor's office, said Chief Supt. Eduardo Matillano, CIDG director.

Navarro and Yu claimed that they were about to board their Honda Civic car in front of Where Else when three men crept up behind them and forced Navarro into the Honda, and Yu into a Mitsubishi Adventure van. They said the suspects drove them around the metropolis and threatened to kill them if they did not produce money.

Yu said that upon the suspects' instruction, he had called a friend to bring P180,000 to a gas station on Ortigas Avenue in Mandaluyong City. The victims said the suspects also took from them a Rolex watch and a necklace. They were released after the money was delivered, the victims said.

Cinco family asks Comelec...

From page A25

fice was not the issue.

"She (Matibag) should not use it as an issue to go back to the Comelec," Jayme said. "She was not dismissed because of my sister's death but because of other matters."

Still angry and bitter, Carlo said that whatever authorities say, he "knew who did it from the day (she) was shot."

"There was only one person who was mad at my mother," Carlo said.

"These people are cowards. They shot and killed an old lady who was unarmed," he said.

Councilor urges Atienza ...

From page A25

at the Aroceros Park in Quiapo, Manila to save the only bird watching cite in the city from Atienza's plan to erect a building there. The building is to house office of the city school superintendent and a teacher's dormitory.

City Hall also wants to build CCM campus at the Mehan because the school's current building on Escolta Street in Sta. Cruz is deteriorating and not conducive to studying.

The DENR halted the project after finding out that the contractor did not secure a permit from the NHI to build in the area.

Isip said that "Mehan's stature as an ecological enclave provides the best argument for pursuing the project."

"Nothing could better underscore man-nature relationship in an environmentally-sound atmosphere that provides the venue for the eco-education of...the youth," he added.

But the Heritage Conservation Society is bent on preventing any construction on the historical Mehan Gardens.

"The Mehan, as Manila's first botanical garden and site of its first 'Chinatown,' is part of the city's personality," HCS's new president Gemma Cruz-Araneta told the INQUIRER.

"As a unique feature of the city, it should not be erased or defaced by anyone," the former tourism secretary added.

The city government is negotiating with the National Historical Institute to allow the CCM's new campus on the Mehan.

The NHI chair's permission is needed for any construction on a historical site.

Malate's top cop in hot water for slapping rookie

By Philip Tubeza

MALATE police chief Supt. Manolo Martinez is in hot water after he allegedly slapped a rookie policeman inside the Western Police District headquarters after midnight yesterday.

But Martinez denied he slapped the policeman, adding that the complainant was even trying to mulct money from a driver arrested for urinating in public.

PO2 Mariano Ruedas, of the WPD-District Mobile Patrol Unit, yesterday filed charges of direct assault, slight physical injuries, threats, conduct unbecoming of a police officer, and insulting a police officer before the WPD General Assignment Section.

Martinez allegedly slapped him twice on the left cheek at the DMPU office and threatened him verbally.

Ruedas said he arrested Randy Garcia, 32, for urinating on Gen. Luna Street in Ermita, Manila at around 11:30 p.m. The policeman said Garcia also did not have a driver's license and so he was taken to the WPD headquarters.

Garcia's wife allegedly called up former Manila police chief Gen. Jose Diokno who, in turn, talked to Ruedas. Another Manila policeman, a PO1 Custer Casama, allegedly also interceded on Garcia's behalf.

"I was waiting for Gen. Diokno when Col. Martinez arrived with two officers," Ruedas said. "(Martinez) was drunk."

Martinez's companions allegedly disarmed Ruedas and, without any warning, the police chief allegedly slapped him on the left cheek. Ruedas said he stepped back but Martinez slapped him again.

"When did you become a policeman? Next time, I'll kill you," Ruedas quoted Martinez as saying.

But according to Martinez, Diokno arrived and talked to Ruedas because Garcia complained that the policeman tried to extort money from him.

Martinez also denied he was drunk when he went to the DMPU office.

Martinez said when he arrived, Ruedas was also disrespectful to him.

Lacson as TV commercial model

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

I LIKE that TV commercial promoting a cheap local brandy where the model is Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson. Honest, I really do. It amuses me no end.

Why? Because the Ping Lacson being featured in that commercial is not the Ping Lacson in real life. There's no truth at all in that advertisement.

* * *

In that commercial, Lacson is featured as a guy who knows how to shoot. Who are they kidding? Yes, Lacson can shoot all right, but at pointblank distance. That means that his target is so near the victim gets gunpowder burns all over his face. That's how close Lacson shoots at his target.

When he was still at the dreaded Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group (MISG), Lacson once told then Maj. Reynaldo Berroya, his superior, there was no need to practice how to shoot since all their targets were tied up, anyway. Berroya is a good shot and devotes a lot of time at the firing range.

Lacson's lack of proficiency with a firearm was the reason he practically banned guns in the hands of civilians when he was PNP chief. He didn't want civilians to be proficient in guns because they might shoot back when they were shot at by abusive policemen. Most of Lacson's men at the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF) were abusive.

* * *

Lacson is also pictured as a guy who exercises regularly. Another fantasy!

Ping Lacson does not believe in exercising for health although he forced his subordinates to exercise when he was chief of the Philippine National Police (PNP).

Lacson does not have to exercise to get trim. He will always be trim. If he eats a lot, he vomits the excess intake. Why? Because when he was still a second lieutenant, he was accidentally shot by a fellow officer who was playing with a gun. Doctors operated on Lacson and cut a large portion of his small intestines that was hit by the bullet. That's the reason Ping Lacson cannot eat a lot. How every man would like to swap places with Lacson!

* * *

Lacson, a drinker? He's a teetotaler, he never touches any kind of liquor.

I have been with Lacson several times to a bar in Manila, and all he drank was orange juice. The guy can drink gallons and gallons of orange juice the whole night without puking.

The last time I heard he took alcohol, he was so drunk be became bitchy. I won't elaborate.

* * *

That commercial is a cheap shot at promoting Lacson who has signified his intention to run for president.

I don't blame the owners of the firm that makes the cheap brandy. The owners are Chinese who were probably kidnapped and then "rescued" by Lacson's men. Please take note of the quotation marks on the word rescue.

A guy who can lie about himself in a commercial will not have any scruples making other lies.

* * *

But Lacson has one saving grace which all our presidents, including Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, should have: forthrightness.

Lacson said that if he got elected president he would urge the wider use of contraceptives to curb the country's runaway population growth. By saying that he has displeased the powerful Catholic Church in this country.

I agree with Ping Lacson that the government should act now in slowing down population growth. For a very small country, we have 80 million people. It will hit the 100 million mark in a few years if we don't watch out.

* * *

The Catholic Church in the country is very meddlesome. It is perpetuating theocracy or rule by religious people like what they have in Iran.

Jesus Christ would have disapproved of what the Church is doing in the Philippines.

* * *

Italy, the site of the Vatican, had the same problem we face vis-a-vis the Catholic Church.

Yet, Italy was able to get out of the control of the Church when it passed the divorce law. The Catholic Church prohibits divorce.

Let's remain a Catholic country, but let's not be dominated by the priests and bishops.

* * *

This is one of those few times when I feel cheated and used in my public service program, "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo." My staff feels the same way.

Rutchie Pido, 23, a *provinciano* from Davao del Norte has withdrawn his complaint against the Western Police District cop SPO2 Angelito Camero who slapped and threatened him with a gun for no apparent reason.

Camaro, a member of WPD's intelligence and investigation division, was in hot water for a while after we at "Isumbong" brought his abusive act to his superiors.

* * *

He was made to plant trees and vegetables at the police camp in Bicutan. But he's back at the WPD because Pido had withdrawn his complaint without informing us.

It's very frustrating to learn that the guy you were trying to help fight back, did not want to fight back.

Baby Euanne needs help

By Margaux Ortiz

A FOUR-month-old baby girl is appealing to your kind heart.

Baby Euanne Dones was born last July 20 with Congenital Mobius Syndrome, a rare condition affecting her breathing and swallowing pathways. Immediately after birth, she was confined at the Intensive Care Unit of St. Jude Hospital, Los Baños, Laguna, then moved to the ICU of Philippine General Hospital.

For the third time, she was transferred to the ICU of Philippine Children's Medical Center (PCMC) in Quezon City for a series of major operations.

"Euanne is our first and only granddaughter," said Eugene Labadan, 46, in a letter to the INQUIRER. "Due to her delicate condition, we decided to let Euanne be admitted as a paying patient, fully aware of the huge expenses that will follow."

He said that Euanne has complications and open wounds from her surgeries that need close attention. He said the decision to put his granddaughter in the pay ward was due to his experience with his then year old sister who died in his arms because she was a charity patient and did not get adequate medical treatment.

"We don't want to go through the same experience with our granddaughter," he said.

Euanne was discharged from PCMC last Aug. 30, but only to be readmitted less than a month after because of infection.

After another major surgery last Sept. 23, she was again discharged on Oct. 4, but had left the hospital with a balance of more than P240,000.

"We are now pleading...begging for anybody's help," Labadan appealed. "Any financial assistance will be used to pay off the hospital's bill and medical expenses for Euanne's long period of recovery at home."

Donors may contact Mr. Labadan at (02) 881-7238 or (0917) 8913057.

Widower duped of retirement pay

By Leila B. Salaverria

WIDOWER Roberto Abanilla, a retired Meralco employee lost part of his retirement pay to a Meralco executive whom he said had borrowed the money but has failed to pay it back.

Abanilla has filed three counts of violation of the bouncing check law against Marissa G. Cabugao for issuing three checks amounting to over P.6 million that had bounced. Cabugao is scheduled for arraignment on Monday, Nov. 25.

Abanilla, who retired in 1994, said Cabugao, a Senior Superintendent at Meralco, had started borrowing money from him in 2000. He said he had trusted Cabugao since she and his wife Alicia were friends. He said he had withdrawn the money that was meant for his children's education and lent it to Cabugao.

Cabugao was at first consistent with her payments, but her checks began to bounce in 2001, Abanilla said. He added that she would replace her bounced checks, but they would bounce again.

Saying he has grown tired of running after her, Abanilla filed estafa charges against Cabugao early this year for three bounced checks amounting to P607,000 that were supposed to be her payment for the debt.

"I worked for 31 years for that money," the widower told the INQUIRER.

Abanilla said that Cabugao's lawyer had even spoken with his lawyer to discuss an out-of-court settlement, to which Abanilla agreed.

Still, Cabugao has not honored this agreement, said Abanilla.

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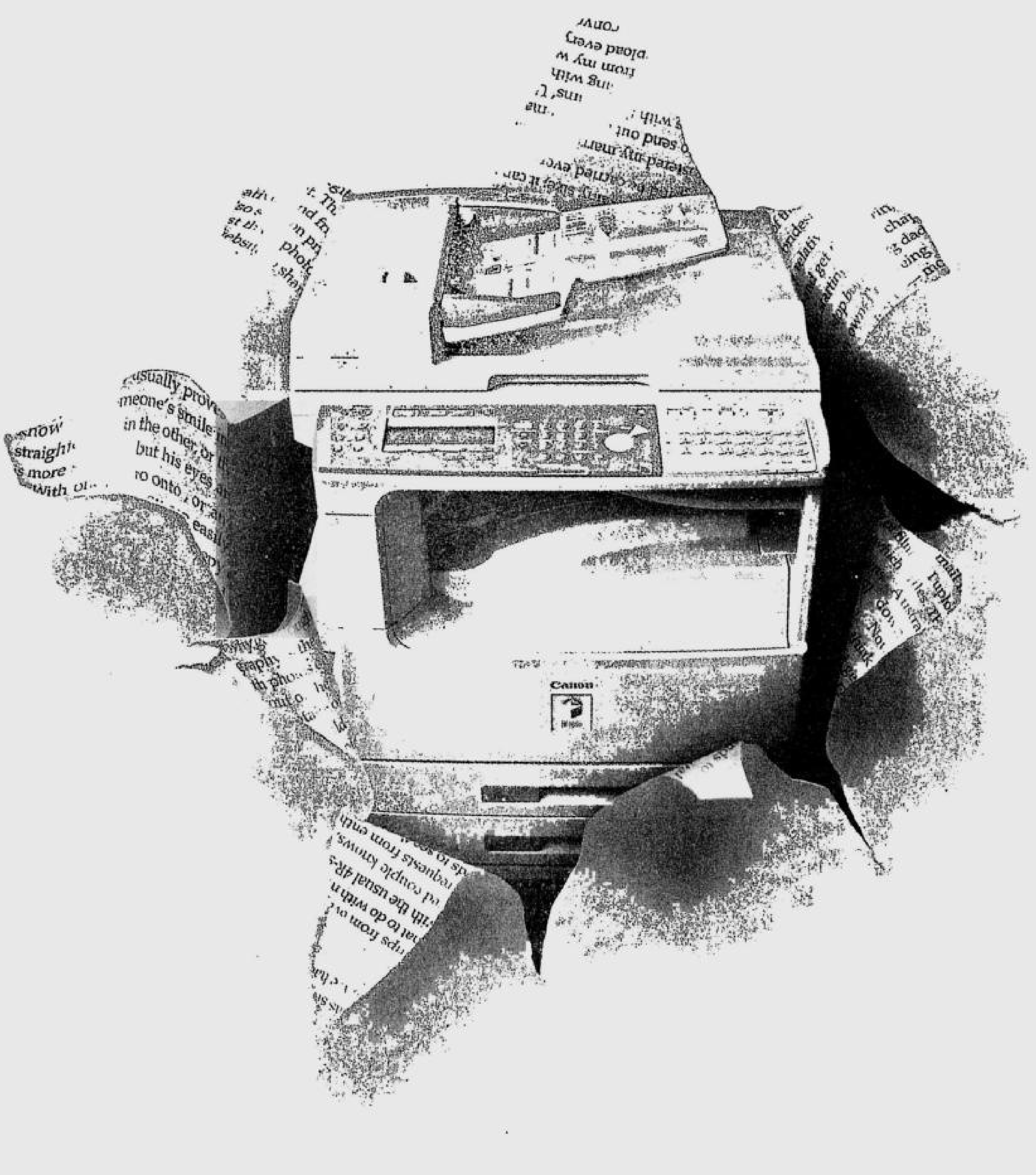

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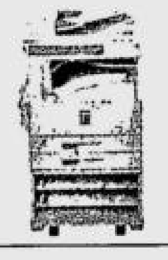

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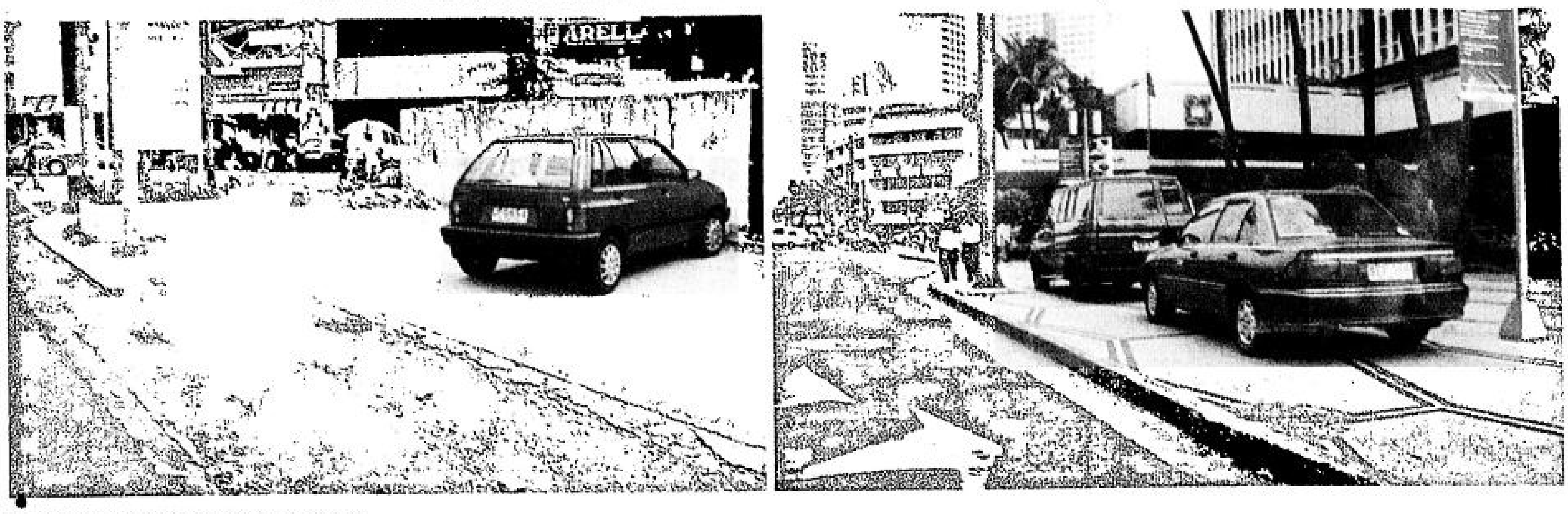


PARK NOT JUST ANYWHERE
Glenn Ellema of the Makati Public Safety Group ordered the towing of the car parked on a vacant lot on Makati Avenue (left), but not the cars blocking a clear sidewalk also on Makati Avenue in front of the DBP building (right) last Friday. A Makati ordinance prohibits parking in sidewalks and adjoining lots, but the absence of signs has kept motorists guessing and paying up to P1,000 in illegal parking fees. Will Mayor Jejomar Binay please explain how his men get to pick which cars to tow and why there are no signs on city streets to warn motorists of the perils they face in parking their cars?

Quezon officials junk Metro dumpsite proposal

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE PROVINCIAL board of Quezon on Monday junked the proposal of the Metro Manila Development Authority to turn vast agricultural land into a dumpsite.

In a privilege speech before the regular session of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan in Lucena City on Monday, board member Dante Miguel Cadiz enumerated the reasons why the council unanimously passed a resolution rejecting the proposed "Waste Rail Transfer and Processing Project" of the MMDA.

Cadiz cited the probable ill effects the dumpsite would have on the environment and health of residents there. He also mentioned the provincial ordinance prohibiting the dumping in Quezon of garbage coming from outside the province. He also said the dumpsite could hamper local government programs on tourism and other related projects.

Cadiz also said it was unfair if only the province of Quezon were made to bear the burden of solving the garbage problem of Metro Manila.

"Other provinces should also help," he said.

Cadiz also expressed fear that once the MMDA proposal is accepted, "Quezon may forever be the dumping ground of Metro Manila's garbage."

"Besides, if this is a good project, why is it that no province wants to grab the offer of MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando?" he asked.

The planned dumpsite will occupy at least 2,000 hectares of agricultural land that lie alongside railroad tracks in the towns of Tiaong and Candelaria.

When he appeared before the Sanggunian last month, Fernando promised provincial officials that he would "industrialize" Quezon if they would agree to host a dumpsite for Metro Manila's garbage.

The committee on environment and natural resources initially wanted to study the proposal. But the plan was scrapped when provincial board members agreed there was no need for the committee to do so.

Board member Remy Diestro said after they personally saw the filth and smelled the garbage when they went to a dumpsite in Metro Manila, he decided against the MMDA plan to dump Metro Manila trash in his province.

The provincial board also decided to put up billboards that would read "Basura, Bawal sa Quezon, Provincial Ordinance No. 9."

Renegade official to claim his seat in Manila council

By Jerome Aning

THE MAN Manila officials refuse to recognize as president of the city's barangay league may show up today to claim his seat in the city council.

Natalio Beltran III is armed with an opinion from the Solicitor General's office that Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and the city council "clearly acted with grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction" when they enacted and executed new rules for league elections.

Beltran yesterday submitted his credentials as winner of the Oct. 21 league elections to Vice Mayor Danilo Lacuna, the council's presiding officer.

"I am ready to reassume my position as ex officio member of the council in the soonest time," he wrote.

The Atienza administration, however, recognizes Carlos Castaneda as the legitimate league president.

Castaneda was elected on Sept. 15 under new election rules formulated by the City Council. He has been attending sessions, but he has yet to receive his salary because Lacuna doubts the legitimacy of his position.

Beltran also sent to the Council a certificate of the oath he took as president before Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. on Nov. 12.

In an opinion dated Oct. 11, Assistant Solicitor General Cecilio Estoesta, said the Council does not have the right to legislate on the manner of barangay league elections because such power is not mentioned in the City Charter.

Another enforcer sacked for raping autistic girl

LEOPOLDO M. De Leon became the second employee of Makati's Public Safety Department (Mapsa) who would be dismissed from service after he was accused of raping an autistic girl, 17.

Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay ordered the dismissal of De Leon after rape and child abuse charges were filed against him Tuesday.

De Leon, 41, a resident of Guijo Extension, Barangay Cembo, is currently detained at the Makati City Jail.

De Leon was accused of raping the girl inside her house on Nov. 15. The victim's uncle caught the suspect with his pants down inside the girl's room, police said.

So far, 33 other Mapsa employees have been terminated this year for various offenses including extortion, misconduct and drug dependence *Leila Salaverria*

DPWH to turn over traffic control to MMDA

By Leila Salaverria

BY YEAREND, the Metro Manila Development Authority expects to have full control and supervision over the Traffic Engineering Center, which is currently under the Department of Public Works and Highways.

All personnel, equipment and facilities of the TEC should be transferred to the MMDA because traffic management is under the latter's mandate, according to MMDA Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna.

"When there is traffic congestion, who do the people blame?" Lacuna asked. "(They blame) the MMDA. So the TEC should be under our control."

Lacuna said in a phone interview that the TEC exists because of the MMDA.

Officials of the MMDA and the TEC met for the third time on Monday to discuss the terms of transfer.

Lacuna said there were a few concerns that TEC officials have brought up. One of them is supervision of traffic in areas outside Metro Manila.

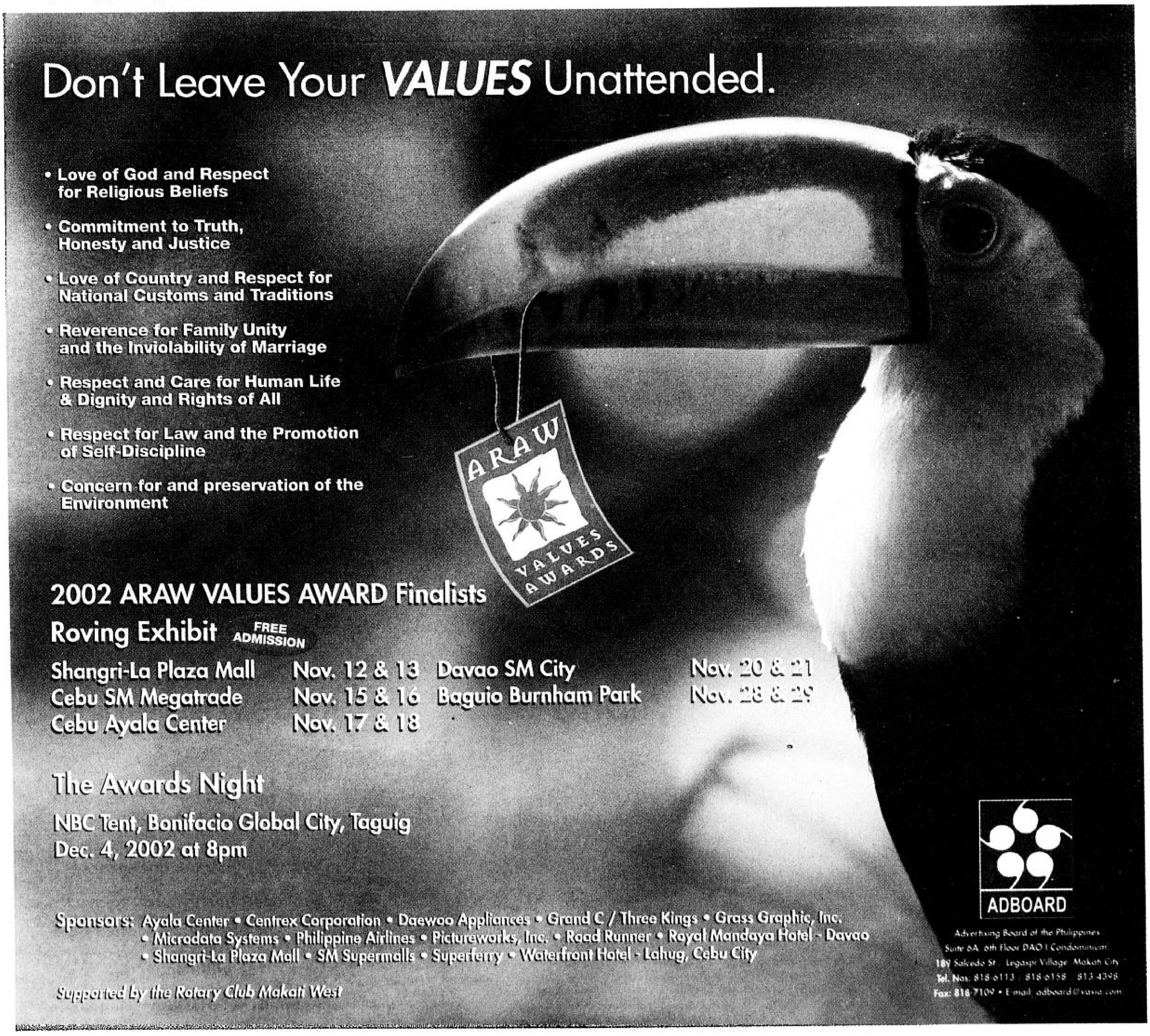
He said this came about because some local government units have requested for traffic supervision from the TEC.

But the MMDA would only be focusing on the metropolis once it has control over TEC, Lacuna said.

The talks, however, are going well, and before the end of the year, the MMDA is expected to take over the TEC, Lacuna said.

While some of the TEC employees are MMDA personnel, about 100 more TEC employees are expected to be transferred to the MMDA.

The MMDA also took over Metro Manila flood control functions from the DPWH this year.



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Diana Zubiri comes into her own

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SHE started out like other bold starlets much more daring than her sweet looks suggested, but not very striking otherwise. Predictably her first sexy starrer was graphic but generally rather awkward and strained.

In time, however, **Diana Zubiri** began to show that she had more to offer than gumption and a blithe disdain for clothes. In a subsequent starrer, she had to play a psychologically disturbed young woman, and she managed to pass muster.

But Diana really started to come into her own when she was rapped for posing for a pictorial in a wee bikini on a public thoroughfare in Mandaluyong.

Instead of breaking into tears and begging for pity, the bold star faced her accusers and defended herself. Soon, other people also started coming to her defense, wondering what she had done that had been so horribly scandalous and deserving of punishment, including a possible jail term.

Without coming across as termagant or *palengkera*, Diana finally found her voice, the public discovered its latest "underdog" in her, and generally supported her side in the dispute.

The end result is, Diana Zubiri is now a more visible, recognizable and popular celebrity than she was before that controversial pictorial got her on newspapers' front pages, and on the TV news.

The heretofore shy actress whom people noticed but couldn't place has now acquired a more dynamic persona that should serve her well in her movie career.

Her combination of "sweet" looks, sexiness and her now spunky personality makes it possible for us to think of Diana beyond the sexy-film syndrome.

It may not happen soon, but she could, like **Elizabeth Oropesa**, **Lorna Tolentino**, **Amy Perez**, and **Rio Locsin**, also "graduate" to playing roles for which she doesn't have to dare and bare.

One-two punch

FILIPINO films are expected to come on strong at the end of the year, with some big productions being showcased in the Metro Manila Film Festival. Before that, however, it's tough times for the local movie industry, as it has to contend with some "monster" blockbusters from Hollywood.

"Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets" is currently showing in 150 theaters nationwide and before the month is over, the new James Bond film, "Die Another Day", is completing the one-two punch that could well knock out local movies for the nonce.

Most local films are steering clear of playdates this month except for sexy flicks like (take a deep breath) "Sex Files," "Masarap na Pugad," "Hibla," "Two-Timer," "Kasiping", etc. Producers of these "adult" productions feel that they have a different market from "Harry Potter" and the James Bond film, even if the latter does have some sexy interludes.

The current "rout" of non-sexy Filipino productions shows how Hollywood movies continue to dominate the local film scene, despite occasional hits like "Kailangan Kita."

Some of this can be blamed on local movies' inferior production values and trite formats, but most of it is still due to local audiences' abiding colonial mentality.

If our movie producers really want the local film industry to recover lost ground and prosper, they have to address this sad reality head-on.

They should come up with productions that instill pride in our filmmakers' capabilities, not fritter them away with sleazy flicks that show them at their most opportunistic and exploitative.

They're not about to do that, however, so they'll have to put up with the current rout of local films, while the hit behemoths from Hollywood ride roughshod over them at the box office.

On Star Movies

THE TEEN thriller, "Scream," will be shown on Star Movies at 9 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 23. It stars **Neve Campbell**, **Drew Barrymore**, **Skeet Ulrich**, **Courteney Cox** and **David Arquette**. Replay is at 4:30 a.m. on Nov. 24.

Symphonic concert

THE SAN Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra will play **Tchaikovsky's** compositions on Nov. 23 at the CCP. **Dmitry Liss** conducts and **Albert Tiu** is the featured pianist. The concert is a presentation of the San Miguel Foundation for the performing arts.

ASIDE from hosting "Digital LG Quiz" with Paolo Bediones, Regine Tolentino is busy with other TV and film offers.

Regine wants to be good role model

By Marinel R. Cruz

ONE year after she decided to part ways with Lander Vera-Perez, her husband of six years, TV host Regine Tolentino insists they're still a family because of their children.

"Look, I'm still wearing my wedding ring," she says.

Regine, 24, married Lander when she was only 18. She and daughters Azucena Reign and Alyssandra Reigen, currently live with Regine's mom and dad in San Juan.

Lander, meanwhile, lives in the house of his mother Bernadette Vera-Perez.

"Lander and I are in good terms," discloses Regine whose youthful glow and radiance did not escape reporters' probing eyes during the "Digital LG Quiz" media conference at Shangri-La Makati last week.

"Lander and I appreciate each other more now. At least, *namimiss na niya ako ngayon*. We're also at peace with each other. We're now in a happy atmosphere, probably the happiest since we got married six years ago."

Now that she and Lander live apart from each other, Regine focuses on taking care of her children and managing her RTW business.

The "Regine's" boutique in Greenhills is where she displays clothes that she herself designs for women and children.

"I get ideas from magazines," says Regine. "I love shopping for fabrics. I'm pretty proud of my beadworks. I only wish I can say the same about my marriage."

Aside from hosting "Digital LG Quiz" with Paolo Bediones on GMA 7 every Sunday, Regine is also busy doing corporate shows and performing on screen.

Regine, an ABS-CBN talent, is a regular cast of the comedy sitcom "Klasmeyts" and host of the weekly noontime show "Asap." She will also be featured on GMA 7's newest tele-series, "Hawak Ko ang Langit," starring Jomari Yllana and Assunta de Rossi.

"They will see a different me in the tele-series," Regine says. "I'll make things miserable for Assunta's character. I'll do everything to steal Jomari from her."

Regine is also reviving her movie career. She will soon be seen opposite Ronnie Ricketts in the action film "Dayo," where she gets to fire a gun, do some action stunts and get beaten up.

"I want to make movies that my whole family can watch," says Regine.

She wants to be a good role model not only to her two daughters, but also to the youth who watch her every Sunday on "Digital LG Quiz" show.

"*Napagsabihan na nga ako* about the outfits that I wear whenever I appear on other TV shows," Regine shares. "I understand the producer's apprehensions. I just tell them that I can't cover my whole body and wear loose costumes while I'm dancing on stage.

"But they have nothing to worry. I have everything under control. This is one aspect of my life I know how to handle."

Will wedding coverage strain Assunta's relationship with GMA 7?

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I WONDER if GMA 7 bigwigs are aware that ABS CBN 2 has the exclusive rights for the coverage of **Assunta de Rossi** and Rep. **Jules Ledesma**'s civil wedding on Dec. 14 in San Carlos, Negros Occidental? Won't it strain Assunta's relationship with her GMA 7 family?

It's bad enough that her ties with her mom **Nenita** and sister **Alessandra** are already factious. The last thing Assunta needs right now is another discord so she can get hitched peacefully.

With all the intrigues hounding her, Assunta might have "asuntos" left and right.

I'm just trying to find the cosmic humor in her charmed yet beleaguered life.

Maui not his type

MY beloved gay alter ego **Peter Serrano** (second unit director of GMA 7's "Kahit Kailan") told me he was totally pissed off with the arrogant answers that Powerboys member **Jay Salas** gave in "The Buzz" last Sunday, with regard to the newcomer's text messages to **Maui Taylor**.

Jay reportedly asked Maui if she wanted to go out with him on a date. But he vehemently denied it with matching histrionics and stinging sarcasm.

Jay insisted, "Maui was linked first to another Powerboy **Jordan Herrera**. Now me! Is she out to hook us all? Excuse me, my type is mestiza. Please zoom in on my cellphone. This girl is who I like to date, not Maui."

Such haughtiness! Jay is apparently suffering from a different kind of hydrocephalus, as the side effect of Powerboys' sudden fame.

The tendency of young upstarts like Jay is that they believe their own hype. I've met all the big stars and I must say that what sets them apart from newcomers like Jay is their being grounded.

As for Jay, he is also grounded but in a different sense—grounded by fame, too much, too soon. He better come to his senses soon lest he wants Powerboys to have a major power failure.

Peter also pointed out to me that in the same "Buzz" episode, he marveled at how **Romano Vasquez** (former bold star) had no qualms about his being a macho dancer now.

My darling Peter said, "Romano's interview was a stark contrast to Jay Salas' VTR. Romano is all-man. He was not ashamed at all about dancing in a gay bar and he even proudly showed off the place where he works. He knows what dignity in labor means.

"In the United States, dancing for money is considered a profession. I don't know why some sectors in our society can be so hypocritical towards macho dancers."

I couldn't have agreed more with Peter. It's not that I'm espousing gay bars, but neither am I deprecating it. True to form, I've always believed in letting people be.

Gays and straight people may be different but nonetheless we are equal. Who says equality of rights is confined to males and females anyway?

Internet victim

MY new-found friend **Michelle Estevez** (of ABS-CBN 2's "Klasmeyts"), our ever-dependable **Tita Bebot**, my coolest bud **Julius Santillan** and I always enjoy our weekly bonding sessions at our sanctuary Café Kilimanjaro (in Timog Ave., Quezon City). Last Monday, though, our session turned serious because Michelle was pouring her heart out about how appalled she is for being the latest Internet victim.

Reports have it that bold pictures of Michelle are circulating not just in the net, but also in Nokia 7650 cellphones.

Michelle lamented, "I was in Boracay recently with my best friend **Olga**. The Ateneo basketball team approached me and had their photos taken with me. That was about the only shots I remember having in Boracay.

"I didn't bring my own camera, so I wonder who's playing this trick on me. Olga and I slept in the same bed. It was just the two of us in our room. It's impossible that Olga would take pictures of me using her 7650 while I was asleep. Besides I don't sleep in the nude."

My heart goes out to Michelle because even if she can give most sexy stars a run for their money, she has turned down all offers for her to go bold.

I cheered her up and gave her a crash course on how to survive show biz controversies since I have always been a target of every imaginable intrigue. They can throw stones at me for all I care but instead of stumbling over them, I chose to build with them.

I told Michelle (who at 18 has quite a curvaceous body for her age) to snap back at her detractors and say, "If you have it, flaunt it. If you don't, then fake it!"

Personal

MUCHISIMAS Gracias to former Congressman and Vice Governor **Hermie Aquino** for always giving me and my friends the red carpet treatment at his hip and ultra-cool Zeno bar (inside BMW showroom Libis, Quezon City).

A day without your friendship, Hermie is worse than a day without vodka.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

NEW "UNANG HIRIT" HOSTS. TJ Manotoc with Love Añover and Daniel Razon.

New face on morning TV

From page A32

From his mom, TJ believes he got his perseverance and determination.

"If there's anybody who's determined, it's her," TJ says of his mom. "She's very driven and goal-oriented. I'm very much like her. That's why at a young age, I think I was able to succeed in many things that I've done, whether in sports or writing."

From his dad, TJ knows he got the love for sports like golf, basketball, football and tennis.

"I'm also very patient like my dad," TJ says. "I'm meek, but not shy."

He has an older sister, Mavis, but now that he's also in the limelight, TJ negates any sibling rivalry with his younger half-brother Borgy Manotoc, the son of his dad with Imee Marcos.

Borgy, 19, is the eldest among Tommy's three boys with Imee. The two others are Michael, 16, and Matthew, 13.

With his dad's third wife, TJ has another brother, Gabriel, 4.

"We're like real brothers," TJ says.

TJ has no exclusive contract with GMA 7, but he is thankful for the opportunity given to him.

Now is his chance to really shine on his own.

A hitchhiker's guide to Diana

From page A32

Rumors

Another rumor about Diana which refuses to die is the one about her being the half sister of Miguel Zubiri, the congressman from Bukidnon.

Is she really related to the Zubiri clan?

"Honestly, I don't know and I don't care," she said. "I have asked my mother about this plenty of times *dahil masyadong maingay ang mga bulung-bulungan*.

"*Natira daw kami sa* Bukidnon when I was very young, but it was in Olongapo City that I grew up and studied elementary.

"I have no idea who my father is and I am no longer curious to find out what the real truth is. And if I were a Zubiri, it won't be a big deal for me."

She said she met Miguel Zubiri only once during a taping session and their exchange was limited to a brief "hi."

Whatever the truth is, the congressman reportedly found Diana to be pretty and was not offended by all the talk.

In fact, Miguel initially agreed to be Diana's co-presenter in a recent awards night. But the congressman failed to show up, which fueled rumors that forces out there pressured him not to attend the occasion.

Diana, on the other hand, took the rejection graciously.

If it were not for Seiko, Diana would probably still be knocking on the doors of producers seeking for the right break.

"I applied at Viva when I learned they were looking for fresh talents," she said. "I was fourteen then. *Ni hindi man lang nakita kung ano and hitsura ko ni* Vic del Rosario *dahil hanggang sa ground floor lang ako nakarating*.

"Somebody took a glance and told me *bumalik ka na lang*. What I cannot forget about that experience is that we walked home all the way from Hemady Street to PHILCOA because somebody stole the money for our fare."

Her luck changes

"When I tried my luck at Seiko, I made up my mind not to go wholesome if they will accept me," Diana said.

She has done there films so far: "Itlog," "Bakat" and her new sex drama starrer "Kasiping."

In "Kasiping," she plays a liberated wife looking for sexual enjoyment which her provinciano husband (played by Rodel Velayo) cannot provide.

Diana considered it her wildest role to date.

When asked about the men she is attracted to, she replied "Jericho Rosales," whom she considered "every inch a hunk."

"There is something in his face that connotes sex," she said of Jericho.

Then there is Bernard Palanca, who "has eyes *na parang nagseseduce*."

The same goes for Cesar Montano, she said.

But she reserves her highest compliment for Carlos Morales, whom she will not mind making love on the screen.

"*Maskuladong maskulado ang porma*," she said. "Personally, I want my man to cuddle me in his big muscled arms. I feel I am fully protected."

Among the female bold stars, she admires Rosanna Roces the most because the actress has the knack of calling a spade a spade.

When asked if an actor had taken advantage of her during a love scene, she replied that that didn't even occur to her.

"*Hindi ko iniisip iyan*," she said. "In 'Kasiping' for example, I play an aggressive character who prefers an aggressive partner in return.

"*Ang masasabi kong pang aabuso* is when the director yells cut and he still continues to emote. It has never happened yet."

She said all her leading men have been "willing partners on the screen and very gentlemanly off camera."

"*Itong si Rodel*, he immediately hands me a towel to cover me up after doing a bold scene," she said.

AYALA CINEMAS

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— Ebert & Roeper

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CINEMA-2	BIYAHERA
CINEMA-3	KAILANGAN KITA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	GHOST SHIP
CINEMA-6	SEX FILES
CINEMA-7	MASARAP NA PUGAD
CINEMA-8	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	CLOCK STOPPERS
CINEMA-12	HIBLA
CINEMA-14	BARZEN WOMEN
CINEMA-15	KAILANGAN KITA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	MR. DEEDS
CINEMA 2	9 MORNINGS
CINEMA 3	BESTMAN
CINEMA 4	[illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
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CINEMA-4	SELDA

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HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 11:10,2:30,5:50,9:10	KAILANGAN KITA P13 12:40,2:55,5:10, 7:25,9:40	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS GP 12:00,3:20,6:40,10:00

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Si Antonio Aquitania bilang LANDO
Kasintahan ni Isabel.
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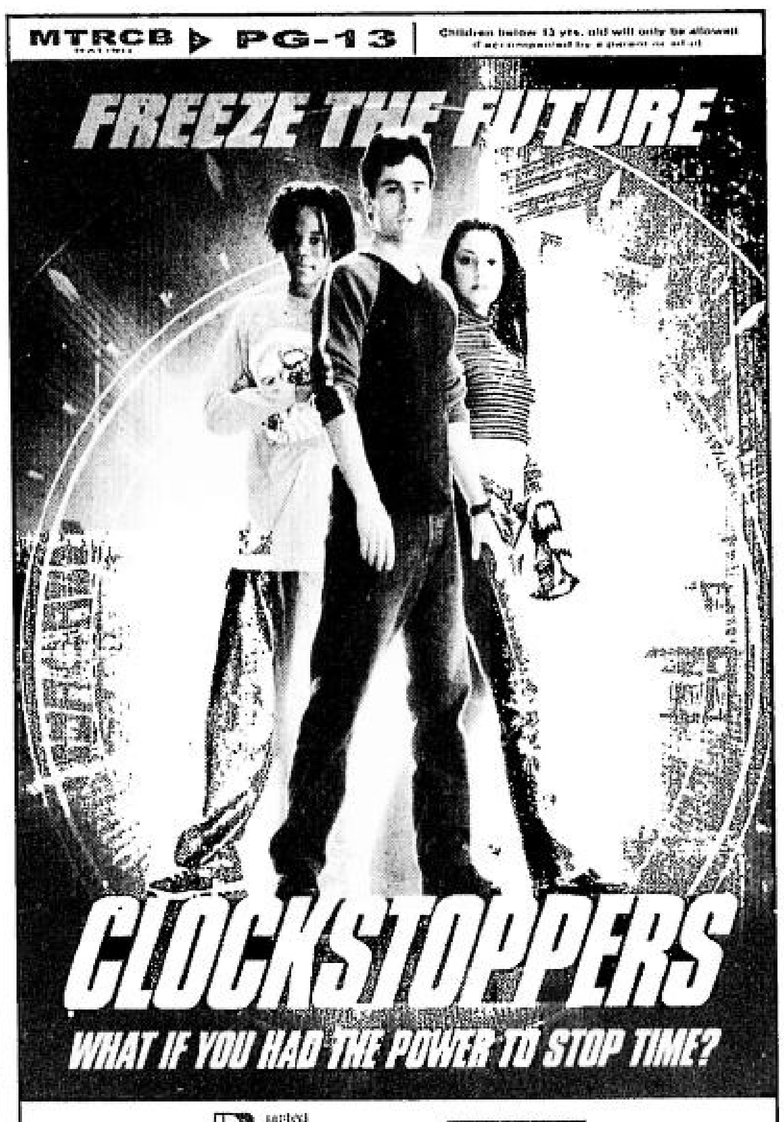
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KAILANGAN KITA	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 12:20, 3:40, 7:00, 10.20	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 11:30, 2:50, 6.10, 9:30	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS 1:30, 4.50, 8 10, 11:30	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST KAILANGAN KITA		TRAPPED 1:40, 4.05, 6.30, 8:55, 11:20	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS	HARRY POTTER & THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS MASTER OF DISGUISE	REGINE VELASQUEZ - SONGBIRD SONGS NOV. 21-22-23, 29-30 / DEC. 6-7,13-14, 20-21, 27-28	MASTER OF DISGUISE 11.30, 1:30, 3 30, 5:30, 7:30, 9.30, 11:30 CLOCKSTOPPERS 11:30, 1.30, 3.30, 5.30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30	MASTER OF DISGUISE CLOCKSTOPPERS

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[illegible] Lounge Halloween Ball
Alabang
October 30 [illegible]
[illegible] Trick or Treat for Kids
October [illegible] Town Plaza
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Cebu
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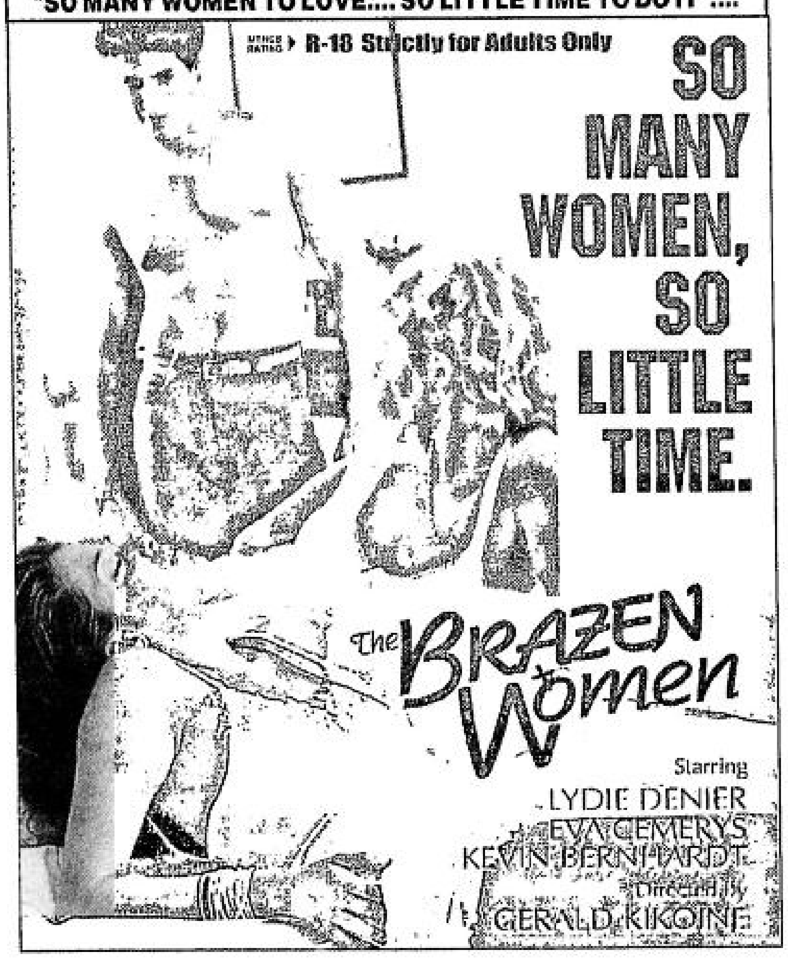
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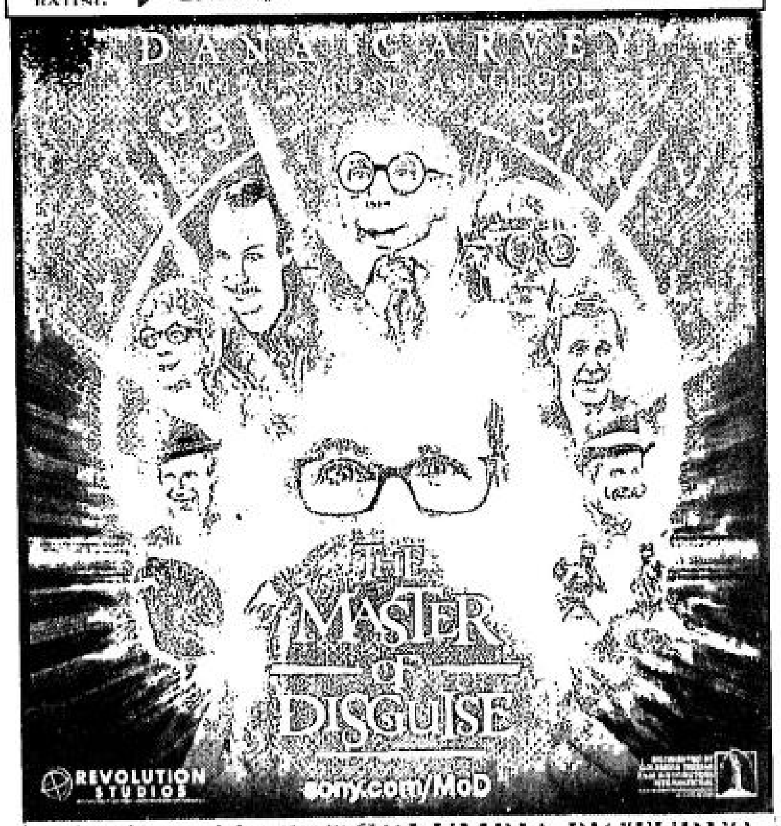

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A hitchhiker's guide to Diana

By Remy Umerez

SEXY star Diana Zubiri, 19, is very much in the news lately, courtesy of Mandaluyong Mayor Benhur Abalos.

The controversy started when the editor of a men's magazine asked her to pose in a bikini at the flyover of Shaw Blvd. in Mandaluyong.

She gained the admiration of passersby (Diana said she simply struck a hitchhiker's pose), but not the approval of Mayor Abalos.

And to think that the star of the forthcoming Seiko sex drama "Kapiling" was not even paid a single centavo for the pictorial shoot, for which she had been charged with public scandal.

The issue was even debated upon over the GMA show "Debate," with the panelists tripping over themselves trying to resolve the question: Shoud Diana Zubiri be charged?

At the end of "Debate," most of the text callers voted "No."

Diana (who was upset with Joey Marquez for siding with Mayor Abalos), also appeared in the show. She later apologized to Mayor Abalos, who was also present but in another studio.

When we talked to Diana at the Seiko office on Times Street in Quezon City, she still could not get over what had happened to her.

"There was no traffic whatsoever," Diana said. "(People) were simply curious, and when they found out it was me doing the pictorial, they smiled and waved.

"I was shocked when I found out I was being charged with public scandal. *Siguro ang tanging kasalanan ko ay naging* cooperative *at masunurin ako sa gustong ipagawa sa akin ng* FHM (magazine) staff."

She said her friends too were shocked when they learned about the charges.

"They know *hindi ako pala-away na tao*," she said. "What I can't understand is why they singled me out. *Trabaho lang 'yon para sa akin*.

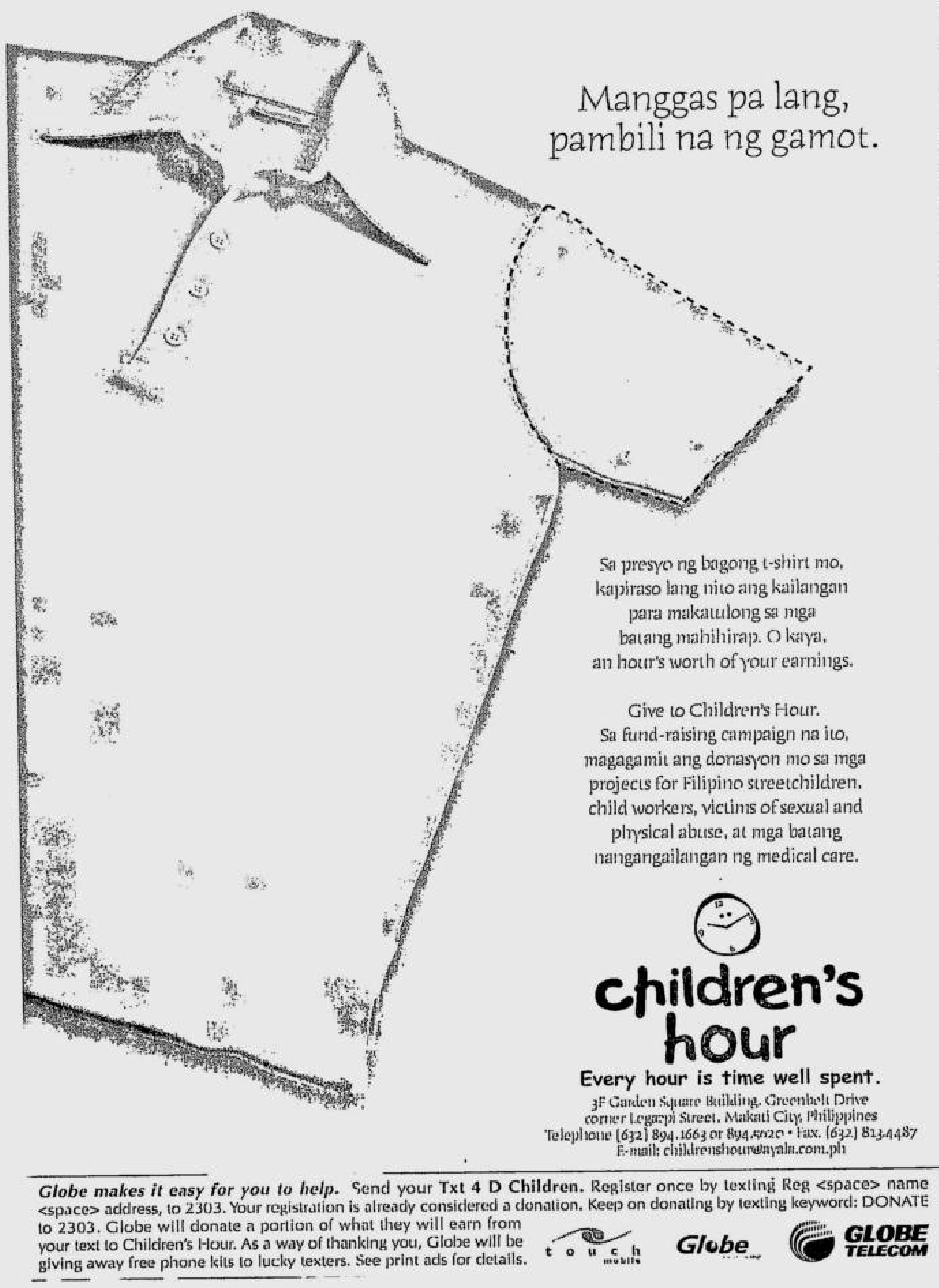
"No one was hurt or got killed. *Kung baga sa pelikula*, it was just like watching a shooting with the flyover as the location site."

And how do we plead for Diana? Not guilty.

A HITCHHIKER'S/ A29

ZUBIRI. Made up her mind not to go wholesome.

PHOTO LIFTED FROM FHM 2003 CALENDAR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TJ MANOTOC

New face on morning TV

By Leah Salterio

THOMAS Junior Pijuan Manotoc doesn't really need any introduction. Perhaps in all of his 25 years, he has constantly been referred to as the son of Tommy Manotoc and former Miss International Aurora Pijuan.

TJ doesn't really mind being associated with his famous parents, but the budding TV host and sportscaster is determined to work hard and make a name for himself.

"I can't be known all my life as the son of Tommy or Au-Au," TJ maintains. "I want to have my own identity and I'm working at it."

The marketing graduate of De La Salle University never imagined himself being on TV.

"Never in my wildest dreams," TJ says. "I was the *kenkoy* in the family and I would often clown around during our gatherings. But being on TV never entered my mind."

Seeing how good a basketball coach his dad was, TJ earlier dreamed of joining the pro-league.

"But my dream gave up on me," TJ says. "Now the opportunities are not there anymore."

When he was in third year college, TJ tried out for the La Salle UAAP team.

"That was the year when the likes of Jason Webb, Tyrone Bautista, Tonyboy Espinosa, Chris Javelosa and Alvin Magpantay were about to exit and Virgil Villavicencio was still the coach," TJ recalls. "But then the system was changed when Jong Uichico replaced Virgil as coach. I wasn't their type of player. But we're all friends now that I'm a sportscaster."

Although he no longer plays basketball today, TJ coaches the high school team of La Salle Greenhills.

He is also one of the sportscasters covering the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) for Vintage TV.

He gets to prove his flair for writing as editor of "Forward," the men's journal of Mega Magazine.

Last June, TJ was given a semi-regular stint on GMA 7's daily morning show, "Unang Hirit." He was taken in after being called for an audition. He was given the segment, "Only in the Philippines," which focuses on the unique things about Filipino culture.

He was also made to anchor the sports segment.

"But after two months, they told me to stop while they were thinking of new things to do for me and for the show," TJ shares.

Last October, however, TJ returned as regular host of "Unang Hirit." He was re-introduced with Love Añover and Daniel Razon (formerly of dzMM, the AM radio station of ABS-CBN). The three new hosts join the morning TV team led by Arnold Clavio.

MANOTOC. Budding TV host and sportscaster.

Although TJ is not a morning person, his new job gives him a different kind of thrill and excitement.

"I never thought I'd have so much energy in the morning," TJ says. "But once you're with the gang on 'Unang Hirit,' they're so contagious. They keep you up and about.

"I'm having so much fun than I expected. I look forward to it, despite the early hours."

Aside from basketball, TJ enjoys simple pleasures. He loves watching films and even went out to see the Tagalog flick, "Jologs."

"I'm not hard to please," TJ says. "I also enjoy good food. I can even eat ginatan at the GMA Cafeteria."

To those who don't really know him, TJ insists he doesn't put up a front even when he's on TV.

"What you see is really me. That's my personality," he says.

NEW/ A29

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Higher rates, weaker peso seen in 2003

By Clarissa S. Batino

MODEST export growth, slightly higher interest rates and a weaker peso are in store for the coming year specially if the tension between the United States and Iraq escalates into a shooting war.

These are what prompted the Development Budget Coordination Committee to consider the downscaling of economic growth targets for 2003.

A DBCC member said the economic team was prepared to make adjustments in its macroeconomic targets next year in view of the global uncertainties primarily due to the possible deterioration of US-Iraq relations.

"Yes, I think the 2003 numbers, macro-economic and the deficit numbers, are going to change... We have more or less agreed in the DBCC that some changes will have to be made," Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said.

The inter-agency team, according to Economic Planning Secretary Dante Canlas, had considered bringing down the gross domestic product growth target to a range of 4.2-5.2 percent while the inflation target would be raised to a range of 4.5-5.5 percent.

Another government official said that the DBCC would likely cut the export growth target in 2003 to 6 percent, the benchmark interest rate average to a range of 9-10 percent, and the foreign exchange average to 52-53 to a dollar.

The DBCC in August approved a growth target of 5 to 5.5 percent for GDP, 4-5 percent average for inflation, 10-percent growth for exports, 8-9 percent average for the 91-day treasury bill rate, and P51-P52 to a dollar average exchange rate.

This year, the DBCC expects GDP to grow between 4 and 4.5 percent, exports by 4 percent, inflation rate to average between 4.5 and 5.5 percent, and interest rates to average between 7-8 percent.

Members of the DBCC technical group and executive board have been meeting almost daily since last week to finalize the fiscal targets starting this year until the budget deficit shall have been eliminated.

Sources said the DBCC would revise next year's budget deficit target to a range of P190-P200 billion after this year's deficit swells to P210 billion. The deficit is expected to be down to zero by 2008 instead of the original target of 2006.

During the meetings on fiscal target-setting, Canlas said the DBCC took the opportunity to revisit the macroeconomic assumptions for 2003.

He said the economic team decided to merge the 2003 targets approved last August with the two US-Iraq scenarios drawn up by the National Economic and Development Authority last month.

Based on two possible US-Iraq scenarios, the GDP growth would slow down to between 4.2 and 4.7 percent, inflation would aver-

HIGHER/ B3

PSE starts Meralco insider trading probe

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is conducting an investigation on possible insider trading involving shares of utility giant Manila Electric Co. prior to the announcement of a Supreme Court order to refund billions of pesos of overbilled charges.

In a press briefing yesterday, PSE president Ernest Leung said the possibility that some market-moving information had been leaked and used for market positioning prior to the actual announcement was a possibility that the PSE was checking out.

Asked about the suspicion among some brokers of possible insider trading, Leung said: "There is a hypothetical possibility. There can be. There may be."

But the PSE president was quick to add that no conclusion had been made as the probe had just begun.

"We're going through the process and it's a long, tedious and laborious process," Leung said.

The PSE started the probe last Friday, when the Supreme Court ruling was released and caused jitters to the market. The PSE then reviewed transactions since October when the string of negative news about Meralco came out.

Leung explained that the probe was based on three parameters used by the PSE's compliance and surveillance group as "alert" benchmarks.

"We're been looking at the price, volume and value of transactions during the period related to the event as well as the number of contracts," he said. "We're going through the next level."

Leung said there was not a brokerage house affiliated with the Lopezes which appeared to be a major player during the selldown of Meralco shares three weeks prior to the release of the SC ruling. Instead, he noted that the dumping of shares was dominated by the "B" market, or those mostly held by foreign players.

Meralco "B," which closed at P11.50 yesterday, is now trading at almost a third of its value since October when it closed at P31.

INDICATORS

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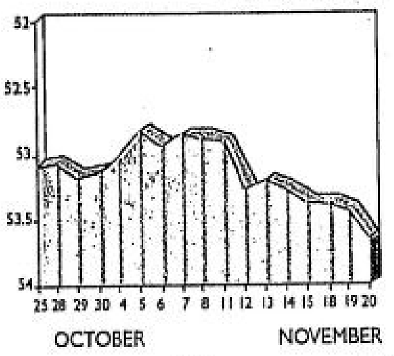

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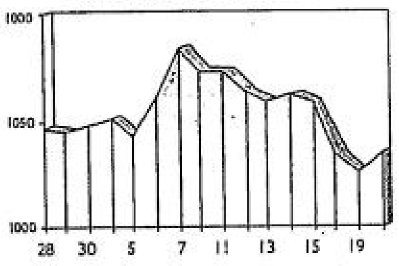
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end higher on Meralco's rebound

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended higher for the first time in four days yesterday lifted by a strong rebound on shares of beleaguered utility firm Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), which the court had ordered to pay its customers billions of pesos for years of overcharging.

Meralco, which fell to an eight-year low on Monday, jumped on reports the government has offered to help the cash-strapped firm form a plan to ensure its financial viability.

"It's mainly because of Meralco, about 40 percent of total trades in the market involved Meralco shares," said Allan Araullo, vice president of Regina Capital Development.

Meralco, which has said it will ask the Supreme Court to reverse its decision on the overcharging case, pared its intraday gains to end 12.64 percent higher at P9.80. Its B shares, open to foreigners, jumped 12.20 percent to P11.50.

President Macapagal-Arroyo on Tuesday directed Energy Secretary

STOCKS/ B2

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Overcharge of the light brigade

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SOON-TO-BE-PRIVATIZED Napocor will have a new president to take care of its winding-up operations, called the "end game" by Napocor insiders, i.e. syndicate.

My info from the Palace is, Gloriaetta already talked to a Napocor executive to take the place of Napocor IOC Rolando Quilala. It seems Gloriaetta herself already heard about the "rush."

That refers to the deals that are now being done in Napocor's "end game."

That is the good news. Now for the bad news...

A serious foreign investor, which even attended ALL the proceedings, hearings, etc. which were related to the Napocor privatization, is losing interest.

In fact, the investor is closing its Manila office, i.e. bye-bye dollars.

* * *

THAT foreign investor is the British firm National Grid Corp. In business, the UK company is widely known to be buying into Transco. This is a Napocor spinoff. Under the law, as part of Napocor's privatization, Transco will own Napocor's transmission lines.

To lighten the burden of the Napocor privatization on the national coffers, the government will kill for any investor in Transco.

One of the most serious investors is that UK company National Grid. Its pointman in Manila, David Swanson, was seen in all the proceedings involving Transco, from congressional hearings to coffee shop meetings, i.e. *chismis* session.

* * *

OFFICIALLY, National Grid is pulling out of Manila, because it is slowing down on its exposures in emerging markets like the Philippines. Officially.

My info is, National Grid got the fright of its life from the recent Supreme Court ruling on the case of the defunct Energy Regulator Board against Meralco.

The court said that Meralco, probably the oldest but definitely the biggest private light company in the country, overcharged its customers.

What's that—overcharge of the light brigade?

* * *

ANYWAY, it is not clear yet how the Supreme Court ruling will affect other public utility companies in the country, such as the new improved Transco.

But word is out, the next target will be the electricity distribution companies in the south, particularly the ones owned by the Aboitiz group.

It seems that National Grid does not have the stomach for Philippine-style business. If ever, it will invest here amid all this confusion, i.e. judicial interence.

* * *

FIRST question is, at least regarding the Supreme Court ruling, did Meralco violate any law?

The last and only answer is, no, Meralco did not. Otherwise, with the court ruling, somebody in Meralco should be locked up in jail or in a government hospital. It's just that Meralco happens to be a public utility firm. The government regulates its business.

Meaning, the government dictates what companies like Meralco can or cannot do, what they can or cannot charge, and what color of underwear their executives can or cannot wear.

* * *

AS I said, the regulator for Meralco used to be the ERB, or the Energy Regulatory Board. About eight years ago, Meralco and ERB had a terrible argument.

At that time, ERB said that Meralco could not charge certain items such as income tax as operating cost. Doing so, based on the ERB argument, allowed Meralco to charge its customers higher rates.

The ERB did not say then that it just allowed another electric company to do exactly what Meralco was doing.

Moreover, Meralco was only doing something which a lot of other public utilities have been doing all over the world for a long, long time.

In other words, Meralco felt that nothing it did, actually, was wrong, i.e. criminal.

* * *

BUT because ERB and Meralco could not settle their argument on their own, they needed a referee.

Meralco went to the Court of Appeals, where it won, but then ERB went to the Supreme Court, where it also won.

It is clear that the case did not involve any violation of any law by Meralco, such as Meralco's peeing in its pants in a public place or something.

* * *

THUS it seems the Supreme Court only served as the referee in an argument which went out of hand.

As bonus points, while it was at it, the Supreme Court also decided, on its own, how Meralco should give back what the court termed as the "overcharging."

The Supreme Court does not only have the last word on the law. It is not only the ultimate judge. It is also the ultimate accountant.

No wonder, some investors like the National Grid of UK are frightened.

* * *

PERHAPS you wonder why Noli Eala is the target of a vile campaign in media. Wonder no more. Eala is now the frontrunner for the next commissioner of the professional basketball league PBA.

Noli is a television news anchor. He also does sports. But more than anything else, he is a lawyer by profession.

Now somebody is raking into Eala's personal life, apparently trying to destroy his chances for the PBA slot, through the media campaign.

Just the other day, all the sports sections of all newspapers all over Metro Manila—and I mean, ALL—got four pages (again, FOUR) of press releases on a court case against Noli which is extremely personal, i.e. love life.

* * *

THAT indicates to me an obvious media campaign. I can only surmise that it had something to do with the PBA. They must be raking it in the league, huh?

Somebody must want the PBA job so much, he and his gang are ready, willing and able to wage a media campaign against the poor guy.

That's how bad things have become in our country. Basketball is the most popular sport here. The PBA is the most popular league of the most popular sport.

And sports should teach us only one thing. And that is, values. What values are there in the media campaign against Noli?

But I think the campaign should only backfire on its principal. Let's say he succeeds and shoves Noli out of the running. Let's say he becomes PBA commissioner.

He is only bound to do what he did to Noli to any member of the PBA board who may someday displease him. He has shown he is capable.

PSE sees new Boni owners honoring donation deal

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange is banking on the institutional commitment made by Fort Bonifacio Development Corp. to fullfill a multimillion-peso property donation in the years ahead amid an impending change in the latter's controlling stakeholder.

Asked to react on the entry of a new investor in Fort Bonifacio, PSE president Ernest Leung said that while it was difficult to hedge against "a change of mind," there was "moral expectation" for the property donation commitment to be honored.

The PSE and FBDC signed last week a revised contract on the site donation for the future headquarters and unified trading floor of the local bourse, waiving an earlier commitment on the part of FBDC to complete the new PSE headquarters by 2004. The new deal calls for a development period of seven years more from contract signing, but the PSE has the option to accelerate the construction while the FBDC has the option to exit from the construction obligation.

Leung said he believed that FBDC, assuming a change in controlling stockholder Bonifacio Land Co., would not renege on the prior commitment made to the PSE.

Under the new deal, FBDC will create a subsidiary that will own the 2,183-sq.m. property in the Fort Bonifacio Global City and shares in the spinoff unit will be transferred to the PSE in various tranches over a seven-year period, so that the PSE would not have to make a one-time payment of the donation tax.

"FBDC also has the government side to it and so we're relying on institutional commitment," Leung said.

"If you have a new party coming in, it doesn't help that you worry about it. It doesn't mean that they can't change their mind, but we have to put some element of trust," Leung said.

A joint venture equally shared by the Ayala and Campos groups is set to sign in the next few days a deal to acquire a 50.4-percent stake in BLC, which in turn controls 55 percent of FBDC.

Stocks ...

From page B1

Vincent Perez to form a group comprised of creditors and government officials which would find ways to keep the debt-laden utility stable.

The government, which is trying to contain a swelling budget deficit, is also keen to preserve Meralco's health because it owns a quarter of the company through various agencies and guarantees about $215 million worth of its debt.

The Philippine stock index of blue chip stocks gained 9.21 points or 0.9 percent to 1,034.20 points.

However, the broader All Shares Index slid 0.74 percent to 608.88 points.

Traders said the market should sustain the upward momentum in the coming days, with most stocks trading at oversold levels, despite the possible release of the 10-month budget deficit on Thursday.

"The deficit has more or less been factored in already," Araullo said.

Turnover climbed to P359.48 million against Tuesday's P338.64 million. Gainers outpaced losers, 29 to 16, with 30 issues unchanged. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, November 20, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	18	17.5	18	65,700
Bank of the Phil. Islands	38.5	39.5	38.5	39.5	1,084,400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	26	26	26	67,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	30.5	32	30.5	31	156,100
Philippine National Bank	28	28	27	27	15,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	9.8	10	9.8	10	6,000
Security Bank Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	61,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	6,400
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	10,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1150	1150	1140	1140	620
Sun Life Financial Serv.	900	900	895	900	1,480
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL, COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16.25	16.25	15.75	15.75	6,100
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.41	500,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	410	410	410	410	72,060
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	300,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.55	3.7	3.55	3.7	42,000
Piltel	0.19	0.22	0.18	0.22	1,240,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	243	249	243	248	100,890
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	6,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.1	10.25	9.1	9.8	229,000
Manila Electric Co. B	11.5	12.25	11.25	11.5	11,747,100
Petron Corp.	1.54	1.56	1.52	1.52	2,069,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	730,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.24	2.24	2.24	2.24	50,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.45	3.45	3.45	3.45	108,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	170,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	13,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	3,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	15	15	14.75	15	423,400
Liberty Flour Mills Inc.	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	65,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	34	34.5	34	34.5	95,500
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.73	0.73	40,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58.5	59	58.5	59	35,300
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	63.5	63	63.5	281,500
Universal Robina Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	15,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.6	1,563,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.34	2.34	2.34	243,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.24	0.18	0.24	70,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.16	0.17	3,900,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	11.25	11.5	11.25	11.5	148,000
Ionics Inc.	1.28	1.28	1.18	1.18	311,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	34,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.59	0.6	0.59	0.6	450,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.215	0.23	0.215	0.215	2,520,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	170,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	2,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.033	0.033	0.033	0.033	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.23	0.29	0.23	0.29	330,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.88	1.9	1.88	1.9	880,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	200,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	80,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16	16	11.25	15.5	171,000
Jollibee Warrants	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	11,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10	10	10	10	3,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	1,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.9	5	4.9	4.95	2,393,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	320,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.13	0.135	4,450,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.86	0.88	0.86	0.87	3,160,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	40,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	1,000,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	46,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5	5.2	5	5.1	8,645,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	70,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	20,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,476,700	53,609,550.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	37,943,928	274,998,072.00
PRO	20,054,000	59,474,310.00
Mining	1,170,000	37,700.00
OIL	1,020,000	14,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	61,664,628	388,134,032.00
AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	396.93	UP 4.26
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,450.29	UP 13.21
PRO	450.23	UP 2.80
Mining	1,062.63	UP 2.15
OIL	1.27	UP 0.01
All Shares Index	608.88	DOWN 4.57
Composite	1,034.20	UP 9.21

NO. OF ADVANCES: 29; NO. OF DECLINES: 16; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 30; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 75; NO. OF TRADES: 2,351

DISCLOSURES

THE LISTING of 1.5 billion shares of Edsa Properties Holdings Inc. shall be on Nov. 22, Friday.

* * *

EQUITABLE PCI Bank Inc. has announced the resignation of Leonora de Jesus as director of the bank and the nomination of Antonio Vilar to the board to replace De Jesus. Also the bank appointed its stock transfer and settlement unit, Trust Banking Group, as its new warrants register following the termination of the services of Security Bank Corp.

* * *

SM Prime Holdings Inc. clarified that it has yet to receive any formal notice from either Clark Development Corp. or the Bases Conversion Development Authority regarding its mall development plans in the Clark Special Economic Zone.

* * *

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank's 475.5 million shares that are locked up shall be tradable beginning Nov. 22, Friday.

* * *

ALASKA Milk Corp. has announced the appointment of Santiago Polido as compliance officer of the company. Also elected to its audit committee were Roberto de Ocampo as chair with members W. Steven Uytengsu Jr. and Jose Facundo. Elected to its compensation and remuneration committee were Antonio Ozaeta as chair and Wilfred Uytengsu and Steven Uytengsu Jr. as members. Elected chair of its nomination committee was Wilfred Uytengsu with Ozaeta and Bernardo Villegas as members.

* * *

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has approved the merger of International Container Terminal Services Inc. and its subsidiary ICX Corp., which operates the rail-serviced inland container depot in Laguna. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Nov. 20, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.996016	1.000000	53.401000
Japan	Yen	0.008152	0.008185	0.437100
United Kingdom	Pound	1.574900	1.581200	84.437700
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.127707	0.128218	6.847000
Switzerland	Franc	0.681083	0.683807	36.516000
Canada	Dollar	0.628957	0.631473	33.721300
Singapore	Dollar	0.563517	0.565771	30.212700
Australia	Dollar	0.558461	0.560695	29.941700
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.642093	2.652661	141.654800
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.265605	0.266667	14.240300
Brunei	Dollar	0.563676	0.565931	30.221300
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000112	0.000112	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022981	0.023073	1.232100
UAE	Dirham	0.271179	0.272264	14.539200
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.004000	53.614600
Argentina	Peso	0.284576	0.285714	15.257400
Brazil	Real	0.279544	0.280662	14.987600
Denmark	Kroner	0.134631	0.135170	7.218200
India	Rupee	0.020694	0.020777	1.109500
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.262144	0.263193	14.054800
Mexico	New Peso	0.097860	0.098251	5.246700
New Zealand	Dollar	0.495827	0.497810	26.583600
Norway	Kroner	0.135862	0.136405	7.284200
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017099	0.017167	0.916700
South Africa	Rand	0.104037	0.104453	5.577900
Korea	Won	0.000831	0.000834	0.044500
Sweden	Kroner	0.110252	0.110693	5.911100
Syria	Pound	0.019340	0.019417	1.036900
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.028762	0.028877	1.542100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000742	0.000745	0.039800

PROF. RAFAEL J. AZANZA
Don Aurelio Montinola, Sr. Professor of Business Management

Prof. Azanza is a member of the core faculty of the Master in Management Program, and also teaches in the Master in Development Program, the Master in Business Management Program, in various Executive Education Programs, and has been a former Associate Dean of Executive Education. He is the Chairman of the Board of the Dr. Fe del Mundo Medical Center and General Hospital, a trustee of the Leukemic Indigents Fund Endowment, and a director of the Bases Conversion Authority (BCDA), Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation (FBDC), and other major corporations. Prof. Azanza has an MBA from Harvard Business School.

PROF. FELIXBERTO U. BUSTOS, JR.
Executive Director, Jose B. Fernandez, Jr. Center for Banking and Finance

Prof. Bustos is a member of the core faculty of the Executive Education and Lifelong Learning Center (EXCELL) where he is the Program Director of banking and finance-related programs such as Finance for Senior Executives (FSE), the Course for Senior Bank Managers (CSBM) and the Asian Bankers Association – AIM Bank Management Course. His areas of specialization include privatization, local government financing, strategic use of information technology (IT) and behavioral finance. Prof. Bustos has an MBA from Columbia University, a DBA from the University of the Philippines, and is both a CPA and a CFA. He has headed the audit and consulting engagements for Fortune 500 clients such as Exxon, W. R. Grace, and IBM. He is the President of the Asian Consulting and Training Group, Inc. (ACT Group), a consulting firm that houses all external consulting and training activities of AIM professors.

PROF. EDUARDO A. MORATO, JR.
Dean of the W. Sycip Graduate School of Business

Dean Morato holds the Gaston Z. Ortigas, Sr. Chair in Development Management and has been on the AIM faculty since 1975. He was also instrumental in the introduction of the Master in Business Management major in Finance. His areas of specialization include banking and finance, strategic management, development management, and entrepreneurship. Dean Morato was a member of the National Advisory Council of the Department of Health (DOH) and designed and facilitated a strategic planning workshop for the DOH and prepared its strategy paper in devolution.

PROF. MAYA HERRERA
Director, AIM Advanced Insurance Management Course

Prof. Herrera is a mentor in the Master in Entrepreneurship (ME) Program. She teaches Finance, Risk Management, Corporate Valuation, Strategy and Human Resources Management. Her fields of expertise also include strategic planning, total compensation design, managed care, employee communication and actuarial services. She is a fellow of the Actuarial Society of the Philippines and was the chairman of the Society's Health Care Committee and governor-in-charge of its Health Care and Professional Development Committees. She is also a member of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines, International Actuarial Association, and the American Management Association.

PROF. EMMANUEL A. LEYCO
Director, AIM Health Care Management Program
Jaime V. Ongpin Professor of Public Finance

Prof. Leyco was consultant to the Local Government Financing Corporation on credit issues in municipal bond financing and capital development and co-author of an organizational assessment paper for the Philippine Medicare Commission. He was also the New York City's chief legislative analyst for health care financing and director of the City's federal health care financing program. He is currently the director of AIM's Health Care Management Program. Prof. Leyco has an MPA degree from Harvard University and an MA degree in Organizational Psychology from Columbia University.

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Proceeds from $500-M bond issue to fund deficit

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE GOVERNMENT will use the proceeds of the $500-million, 10-year global bonds to help finance this year's worse-than-expected budget deficit.

Proceeds of the bonds sold by three foreign underwriters on behalf of the Philippines were originally intended for the government's funding requirements for 2003.

A government source said, however, that the economic managers had no choice but to use the proceeds of the fresh bond issue to cover part of this year's budget gap after the 10-month deficit, based on unofficial data, reached P188 billion or 4.7 percent of gross domestic product.

The government will announce the official deficit numbers today.

"The proceeds of the $500-million global bonds will have to be used this year. The government has no other choice but to borrow more for this year and for next year as it was not able to anticipate that the deficit would grow uncontrollably," the source said.

The same source said that these funds as well as the proceeds of the P10-billion, three- and five-year loan handled by HSBC could be used to finance a deficit of as much as P220 billion this year.

"The Republic intends to use the proceeds for general financing requirements related to the 2003 budget," said the Department of Finance in a press statement relating to the sale of the 10-year bonds last Tuesday.

The 10-year bond sale was the government's fifth foreign borrowing this year and the fourth from the global market.

This year, the government borrowed $750 million from the 15-year global bond market in January, $1 billion from the seven-year global bond market in March, an additional $300 million from the seven-year facility in May, and $300 million from the five-year euro bond market in September.

This was on top of the $450 million in 10-year bonds sold to the Japanese bond market as well as the $150-million, one-year fund tapped from Citibank last December. Both were meant for this year's requirement.

Higher rates, weaker peso seen in 2003

From page B1

age between 4.6 and 5.5 percent, and the exchange rate would range between P51.50 and P52.50 to a dollar.

One scenario is a protracted conflict that could last from yearend to the first half of 2003 and largely assuming that the US would attack Iraq unilaterally, in which case, Saudi Arabia would not increase its crude oil production.

The better scenario, said Canlas, was if Saudi Arabia would increase its crude oil production and help contain the crude oil uptick to between $27 and $30 a barrel.

Under this setting, the conflict is also expected to last only until the first quarter of 2003 and crude oil may start to stabilize at $25 a barrel.

The tension in the Middle East had pushed the peso down to the 53:$1 level since October as importers, particularly of crude oil, scrambled for dollars in the spot market.

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US, Asean agree on free trade area framework

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE US Trade Representative and Southeast Asia's economic ministers agreed yesterday to draft a region-wide framework on a free trade agreement between the United States and Asean similar to deals that Washington was working out with Japan and China.

However, US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick's insistence to cover a broader area of discussions beyond tariff issues, such as investment and competition policy reforms in the formation of a bilateral trade agreement with the United States, could mean a second US-Asean free trade agreement after the Singapore accord could take a long time in coming.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said the Asean economic ministers agreed to develop an Asean-wide Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (Tifa) that would facilitate negotiations for a US-Asean free trade agreement.

The United States currently has Tifa agreements with the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia—Brunei recently applied for one.

Roxas said these were necessary in implementing President George W. Bush's "Enterprise for an Asean Initiative" to firm up stronger US-Asean relationship through a network of bilateral free trade agreements to increase trade between the two regions estimated at $120 billion, which makes Asean the United States' third largest trading partner.

Zoellick said the negotiations with Asean countries would not focus on tariffs because the United States had been relatively open to many of the Asean countries through a combination of World Trade Organization obligations and US Generalized System of Preferences.

"A lot of the work is not in traditional tariffs but on intellectual property rights, competition policy and services liberalization issues," Zoellick said.

Zoellick cited the recent discussions in the creation of the US-Singapore FTA (which would serve as a template of future US-Asean FTAs) dealt mostly with issues on telecommunications, financial services and lawyers.

ZOELLICK

₱2B in taxes lost to used vehicles, assemblers say

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT lost over P2 billion last year due to its lax implementation of rules banning the importation of used vehicles, mostly through the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, according to an industry group.

In a statement, the Philippine Automotive Federation Inc. asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to finalize her policy on second-hand vehicle imports before her state visit to Japan next month.

Japanese assemblers, who have invested nearly P70 billion in assembly and parts manufacturing, account for 90 percent of the local auto industry's total sales.

Pafi, a national organization of car, truck, bus and motorcycle assemblers, reported that the industry contributed close to P11 billion to the government's coffers—P6 billion in value-added taxes, P2.637 billion in duties and P2.065 billion in excise taxes—on 76,670 units sold last year.

Pafi said had the government closely monitored used vehicle imports, the industry would have sold an additional 20,000 units and generated some P2 billion in tax revenues.

The group said with sales likely to jump by 11 percent to 85,000 units this year, the industry could have added more than P2 billion to the government's tax collections this year.

Mitsubishi Motors Philippine Corp. senior vice president Melchor Dizon said if the government wanted to rein its ballooning budget deficit—which grew to P188 billion in the first 10 months this year—it should clamp down on used vehicle imports.

Pafi president Vicente Mills Jr. said the Department of Trade and Industry should take a firm position on the issue soon, saying to allow the import surge to continue would lead to the demise of the vehicle industry.

Mills said their Japanese parent was expecting a clear signal from the government on its used vehicle import policy during the President's visit to Japan on Dec. 9.

ISPs accuse PLDT of 'false accounts receivables'

By Abigail L. Ho

INTERNET service providers have accused Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. of booking "false accounts receivables" in its financial statements to bloat its already huge income.

In an interview, Philippine Internet Services Organization vice president Jayson Yu told the INQUIRER that PLDT was releasing wrong figures at the expense of its corporate clients.

PLDT earlier accused Piso of owing it around P100 million.

Yu said PLDT raised this debt issue in the media through unnamed sources after Piso filed a complaint against it with the National Telecommunications Commission.

"If they bring up the issue of the P100 million debts, we'll tell them that this is not the venue for that because our complaint is for predatory pricing," he said.

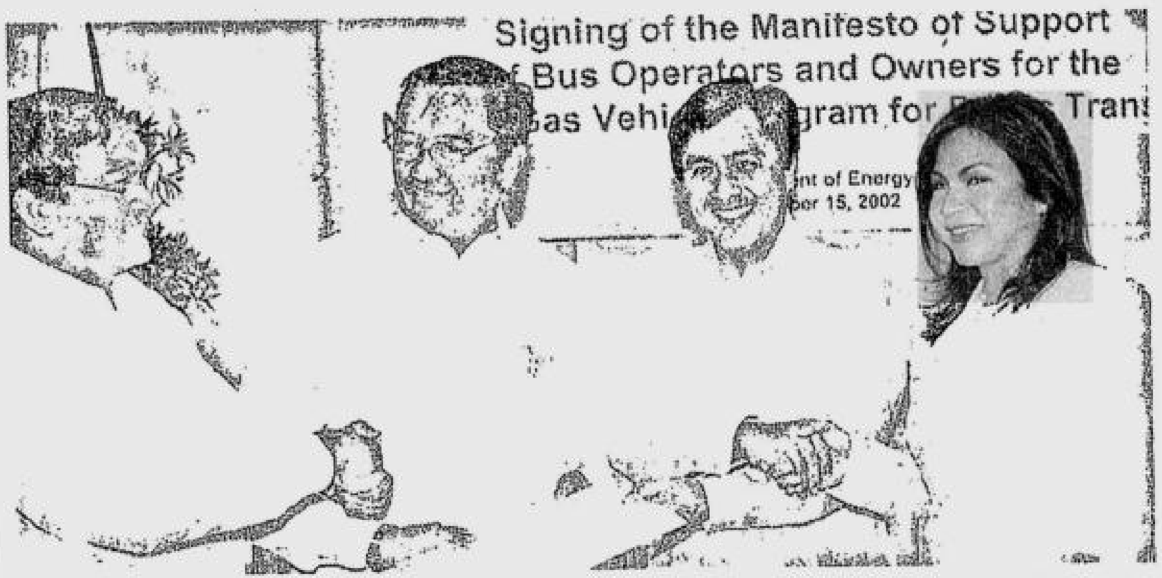
He added that Piso members were not afraid of opening their books for the NTC's scrutiny.

The P100 million that Piso members allegedly owed PLDT was a "bloated figure," Yu said.

"But they book this P100 million as accounts receivables. This means that they're booking false figures at our expense," he said.

But PLDT vice president Menardo Jimenez told the INQUIRER that PLDT had always been a gracious supplier to Piso's members despite most of their members' non-payment of debts.

"It is unfortunate that instead of addressing the issue of Piso's growing liabilities to PLDT, which the company has graciously accommodated without penalties, interest or the cancellation of services, Piso's leaders have resorted to false accusations to justify their non-payment of debts," he said. "If indeed we treat them in the manner they now accuse us of, we are greatly surprised why they continue to insist, and even demand, that they partner with us."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ENERGY Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. (third from left) and Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez (second from left) congratulate Metro Manila Bus Operators Association president Claire de la Fuente and Inter City Bus Operators Association during the signing of the manifesto supporting the Department of Energy's implementation of the National Gas Vehicle Program for Public Transport.

Mineral industry sets conference

MINERAL industry honchos and stakeholders are set to meet in the biggest event of the sector as the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association holds its 49th Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Conference on Nov. 20 to 23 in Baguio City.

Adopting the theme "SHE Moves Forward: Mineral Wealth=Countryside Economic Health," this year's ANMSEC hopes to reflect the Philippine minerals industry's efforts in transforming the country's mineral endowment into mineral wealth by putting in practice safety, health, and environmental protection and management principles to foster countryside progress and community development.

"Safety and health because it is the responsibility of the mining company to protect workers from hazards and risks. Environment because it is the responsibility of the mining company to protect, enhance and manage the environment," Mines and Geosciences Bureau director and PMSEA vice president Horacio Ramos said.

Industry group asks BSP to allow banks to sell pre-need plans

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE PHILIPPINE Federation of Pre-Need Plan Companies Inc. has asked the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to allow banks to sell pre-need plans.

"Since our pre-need products are very similar to annuities and since we are a major force in developing the country's long-term capital market, we respectfully request that initiatives be made to include our industry among those allowed by the forthcoming Monetary Board circular to market bancassurance products," PFPPCI president Juan Miguel Vazquez said in a letter to BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura dated Nov. 4.

The central bank is set to issue a circular allowing banks to use their branches to sell insurance products.

The business is known as "bancassurance," a French term referring to the selling of insurance through a bank's established distribution channels. The result is a bank that can offer banking, insurance, lending and investment products to a customer.

Vazquez said the pre-need industry was willing to comply with the same rules that the central bank was imposing on banks and insurance companies.

In its circular on bancassurance, the central bank is allowing commercial banks to sell products of life and non-life insurance companies where they have equities of at least 5 percent.

Vazquez said the pre-need industry consisted of 64 companies offering pension, education and life plans.

The industry employs over 20,000 employees, 180,000 agents and have trust funds of over P44 billion, of which P13 billion are in the form of government securities.

For the past five years the industry has paid P2.5 billion in taxes.

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Jitse-Phil in visa scheme for IT workers

By Abigail L. Ho

THE JAPANESE government is considering giving Filipino information technology workers working visas to Japan when they pass the Japanese IT Standards Examination of the Philippines (Jitse-Phil) certification tests.

In a speech during the awarding ceremonies for successful Jitse-Phil examinees yesterday, Jitse-Phil Foundation Inc. president Ma. Corazon Akol said Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry was already working on convincing Japan's Ministry of Justice to allow this.

"This is really good news to our IT professionals here because, at present, only entertainers are issued working visas to Japan," she said.

She added that with Japan needing around 50,000 IT workers in the next five years, this would be a good chance for Filipinos to showcase their talents abroad.

The Jitse-Phil Certification Program is the result of a mutual recognition agreement between Jitse-Phil and the Japan Technology Engineer's Examination Center.

Last year's pilot test produced 44 successful examinees out of 726 takers, translating to a 6.1-percent passing rate. All examinees last year were pre-screened.

It was only this year that Jitse-Phil opened the examinations to everyone interested, Akol said.

The exam in September gave certifications to 38 passers from a pool of 744 examinees, representing a 5.3-percent passing rate.

Although a Jitse-Phil review center was established earlier in the year to up the 2001 passing rate, Akol said the success rate still fell by 0.8 percentage points because the examinees were no longer pre-qualified.

"It was free for all this year," she said.

New facility to cut prices of Mindanao corn

A BULK handling facility for grains in Mindanao could help reduce the cost of corn shipped to Luzon, a multi-sectoral working group on corn competitiveness said in a study.

Officials of the country's transport and logistics firms pointed out that the high cost of corn could be attributed to various factors, including the distance of farms to end-destinations and the high level of wastage because of certain inadequacies in the country's ports.

"Any efforts to address the high logistics cost from Mindanao to Luzon will have to confront the following factors: distance of farm to buying stations, processing plants and ports, low production volume to merit bulk handling option, multiple handling from farm gate to trader, high wastage in grains, and high transport rate," the study added.

With a bulk handling facility in Mindanao, there would be no need for sacks and no need for laborers to carry these sacks to and from the warehouse to the delivery trucks.

The reduction in logistics and transport costs would then redound to a decline in corn prices for the end-users, the study said.

But a bulk handling service will be impossible if existing port facilities will not be improved.

The study stressed "the need to improve port operations to maximize the vessels."

ICC clears ₱777M in health, immigrant projects

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE CABINET-LEVEL Investment Coordination Committee has approved two projects worth P776.6 million to improve health care services and boost the government's capability to monitor alien traffic in the country.

The ICC, which screens big public investments and is chaired by the National Economic and Development Authority, said yesterday in a statement that the first project would be a P678.5-million health care package for the Cordillera Administrative Region.

Called the "Establishing and Sustaining Health Facilities as Centers for Wellness Project," the project aims to reduce the annual mortality rate and incidence of diseases across five CAR provinces: Apayao, Abra, Benguet, Kalinga, Ifugao and the Mountain Province.

The project involves the construction of 12 hospital buildings and 12 rural health buildings that will accommodate improved health facilities and provide ample and comfortable space for patients and health workers. It also includes the provision of modernized medical equipment.

The project will also establish a regional resource center to strengthen the capabilities of the CAR's Department of Health-Center for Health Development in providing technical assistance to local government units, government and private agencies.

"The regional resource center will serve as a rich source of data and information, research, surveillance and health resource development. The establishment of the RRC is expected to strengthen the regulatory functions of the various health agencies particularly in the areas of food and drug," the ICC said.

The project is expected to serve some 1.6 million people in CAR and in adjacent towns.

The ICC also earmarked P98 million for the Alien Certificate of Registration Smart Card Project.

World economy more resilient to change–Fed

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan on Tuesday said the world economy has become more flexible no matter how events unfold in coming weeks, but warned that "structural rigidities," particularly in Europe and Japan, could hinder a global recovery.

"You cannot overcome that, except in the very short run, by monetary and fiscal policies," the Fed chief, whose words of warning ring loudly in corridors of power, told the Council on Foreign Relations. "The only way to address those types of structural problems is to do it directly."

US Treasury officials have repeatedly pressed for faster growth in Europe and Japan, while the International Monetary Fund has long urged structural changes in both regions.

Greenspan said the US economy is still growing despite the dramatic impact of a loss of $8 trillion in stock market wealth, a slide in capital spending and the Sept. 11 attacks last year.

But he cautioned the recent weakening of the world economy has raised concerns that the world economy has not reached the bottom of the current business cycle.

Earlier in November, the Fed cut interest rates an unexpectedly large half-percentage point, taking the trends-setting federal funds rate to a new four-decade low of 1.25 percent in what the Fed chief has called affordable insurance for the economic recovery.

However, policymakers also shifted their assessment of risks to the economy to one balanced between inflation and further weakness, a signal to the financial markets this was the end of rate cuts for the foreseeable future.

Explaining the rate cut and shedding some light on why the Fed did not sound overtly worried about the future, Greenspan told a congressional panel last week the economy was weighed down by worry over possible war with Iraq and falling stock prices but played down risks of a renewed slump.

On Tuesday, Greenspan disputed the contention the latest rate cut left the central bank dangerously low on ammunition should the economy deteriorate significantly.

"We are very far from the Fed being restricted," Greenspan said. "There's a general view that as the federal funds rate gets closer and closer to zero, that at zero we are out of business. That is not the case." On Tuesday, Greenspan attributed a sharp fall-off in US business spending to the stock market slide and to geopolitical risks, such as the potential for a US attack against Iraq.

When these risks dissipate, the long-awaited pick-up in corporate spending should emerge, he predicted. *Reuters*

Bank of Japan downgrades assessment

TOKYO— The Bank of Japan downgraded its assessment of the economy for the first time in 11 months on Wednesday due to a slowdown in exports and sluggish production at factories.

"Japan's economy has stabilized as a whole, but there is greater uncertainty toward recovery," the central bank said in its November report.

"While signs of recovery are still not observed in domestic demand, exports are losing their momentum," it said.

The move came a week after the government lowered its assessment of the world's second largest economy for the first time in a year because of similar concerns.

The BOJ's downgrade sent the yen slightly lower against the dollar, further confirming a renewed slowdown in Japan, dealers said.

"The completion of the cutbacks in inventory stocks still underpins the increase in industrial production but the pace of increase has become slower as exports are not rising anymore," the report said.

Declining wages were highlighted as a cause for concern, eroding consumption, which accounts for about two-thirds of the economy.

Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi said earlier Wednesday that it would cut employee pension benefits by up to 20 percent to boost its financial strength, leading to expectations other major banks would follow suit.

"The employment and income situation of households overall remains severe," the central bank said.

The Japanese economy grew 0.7 percent in the three months to September from the previous quarter—down from one-percent growth in the previous three months—as resilient consumer spending offset sluggish exports and a drop in corporate investment.

But with both domestic demand and exports slipping, the outlook is becoming gloomier.

"An increasing number of economic indicators are softening in some countries, particularly in the United States," the BOJ said.

"Based on this development, the recovery in overseas economies is likely to be anemic, at least for the time being. Therefore, exports and industrial production are expected to be more or less unchanged for the immediate future." *AFP*

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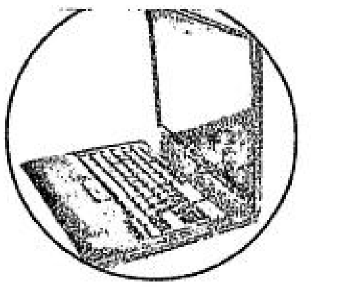

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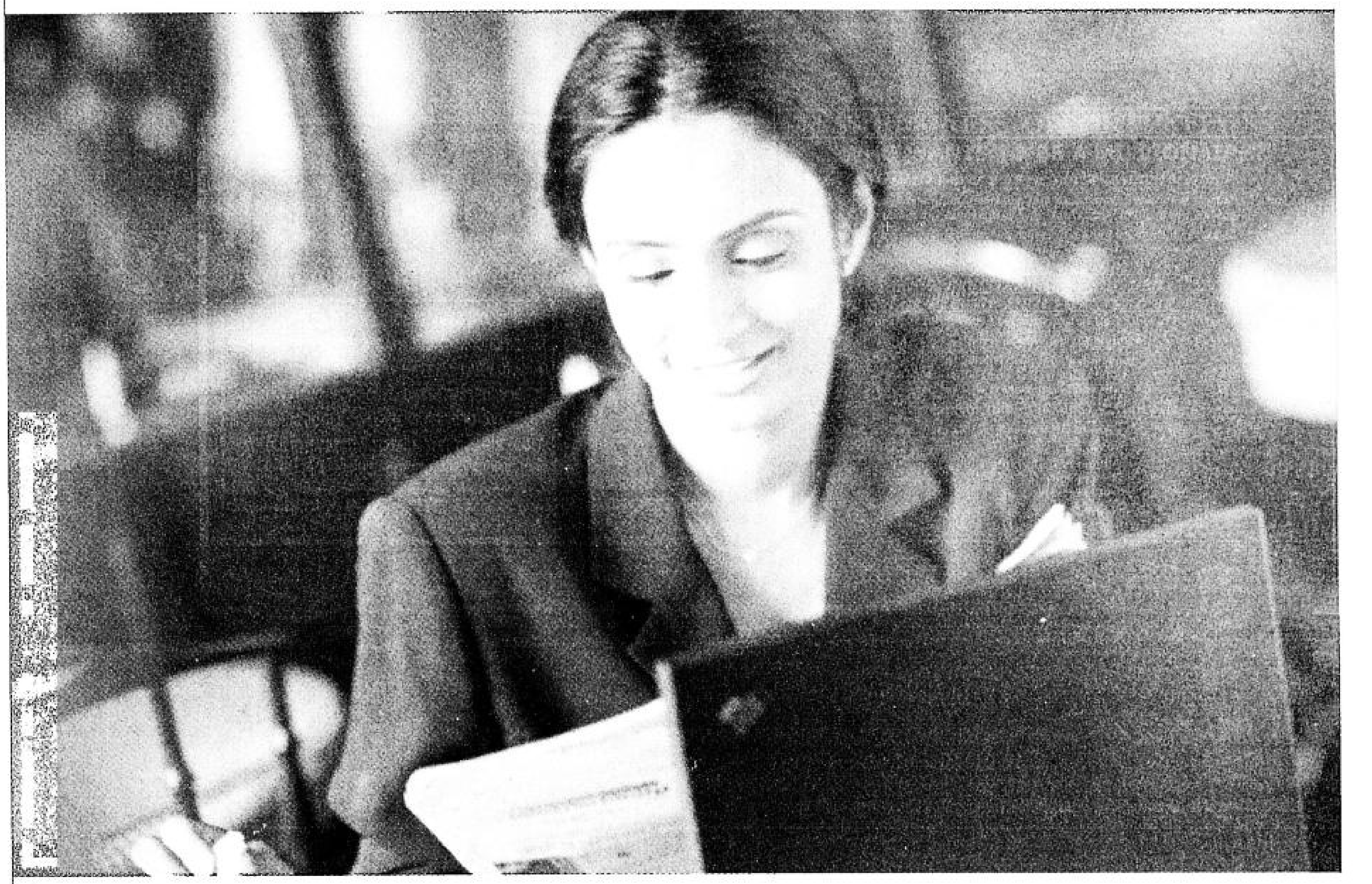

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VAN 4 RENT 8254058 8261045

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BUYING USED CARS 8990215

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HRD PERSNL 09173660641 FATIMA

HRD STAFF 09168563641 MS. JK

OFC JOB 09203844500 KIM

OFC PERSNL 09204114147 ALISON

OFC PERSONL 2781427 EROLYN

OFC PERSONNEL 09202999201 SKY

OFC Personnel 09164894621 Bayl HRD Staff 09196541756 Rally

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

BAZAAR EXPORT BANK TOWER formerly URBAN BANK GrdFlr Aircon Nov. 27,28,29 & Dec. 11,12,13 Call 7137030•7137231 • 0917-4916315 • 09173518509

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late KHO JO CHUA has been extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 37, Page No. 9, Book No. 24 Series of 2002 before Notary Public Elena Milita L. Chica of Manila (PDi - November 21, 28 & December 5, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late JAIME S. DE GUZMAN have been extrajudicially settled per Doc. No. 100, Page No. 20, Book No. IV, Series of 2002 before ATTY. JOSE T. GARNACE, Notary Public of Makati City (PDI-Nov. 21, 28 & Dec. 5, 2002)

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late NIEVES R. DESUASIDO was extra-judicially settled partially among her heirs as per Doc. No. I, Page No. I, Book No. I, Series of 2002 under Roy R. Rebanal of Oas, Albay, Notary Public.
(PDI-Nov. 14, 21 & 28, 2002)

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
CENTER FOR HEALTH DEVELOPMENT IV
DR. JOSE N. RODRIGUEZ MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Tala, Caloocan City

November 20, 2002

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital invites responsible and duly accredited suppliers from DOH/RHO 4 to pre-qualify and bid for the supply of the following items:

A. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Repair of Hospital Building)
B. FOODSTUFFS
C. DRUGS/MEDICINES
D. MEDICAL SUPPLIES
E. LABORATORY SUPPLIES
F. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

A. DRUGS/MEDICINES	9:00 A.M.
B. MEDICAL SUPPLIES	10:00 A.M.
C. LABORATORY SUPPLIES	11:00 A.M.
D. FOODSTUFFS	1:00 P.M.
E. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (REPAIR)	2:00 P.M.
F. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)	3:00 P.M.

Issuance of Bid Documents December 02 to December 12, 2002 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Submission And Opening of Bids:

A. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (REPAIR)	December 13, 2002	9:00 A.M.
B. FOODSTUFFS	December 13, 2002	1:00 P.M.
C. DRUGS/MEDICINES	December 16, 2002	9:00 A.M.
D. MEDICAL SUPPLIES	December 16, 2002	1:00 P.M.
E. LABORATORY SUPPLIES	December 17, 2002	9:00 A.M.
F. CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS (Six Months Consumption)	December 17, 2002	1:00 P.M.

The approved budget for each item (A to F) appears on the Bid/Tender Documents.

Prospective bidders may secure bid proposal forms from the BAC Secretary, Property and Supply Section, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, after payment of a non-refundable fee of P300.00.

All activities shall be held at the Training Room, Dr. Jose N. Rodriguez Memorial Hospital, Tala, Caloocan City, unless announced otherwise.

Bidders who failed to attend the Pre-Bid Conference on December 05, 2002 are not allowed to attend the Bidding on December 13, 16 and 17, 2002.

Each bid must be accompanied by a bidder's bond in the form of certified check, manager's check, or GSIS Bond in the sum of 2.5% of the total bid.

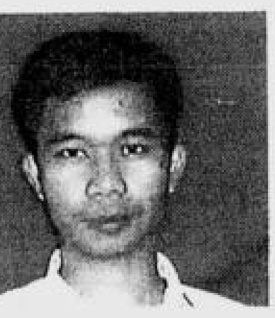
For particulars, interested bidders may contact the BAC Secretary or call telephone no. 962-9884.

(Sgd.) CECILIA A. GARGUENA, M.D.
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – November 21 & 28, 2002)

NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that MR. JOSE S.A. VALENCIANO, whose picture appears below, is no longer connected with SGS Philippines, Inc. effective October 15, 2002. Any and all transactions entered into by him for and/or behalf of the company after said date shall not be honored.



(PDI--Nov. 21 & 22, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MANILA
BRANCH 37

PETER M. IGNACIO,
Plaintiff,
-versus- CIVIL CASE NO. 01-102503
POLICE SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION, INC. et al.,
Defendants.
x-------------------------x

NOTICE OF SALE ON EXECUTION OF REAL PROPERTY

WHEREAS, by virtue of Writ of Execution dated September 26, 2002 issued by HON. VICENTE A. HIDALGO, Presiding Judge of Regional Trial Court, Manila, Branch 37 in the above-entitled case for the recovery by way of distraint of the sum of P10,471,109.03 and the cost of suit plus sheriff's fees and expenses of sale, LEVY was made by the undersigned on February 18, 2002 thru the Register of Deeds of Meycauayan, Bulacan, upon the rights, interest and participation which the defendant CESAR A. BARIA have or may have on the realty together with its improvements existing thereon, which particularly described as follows to wit:

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE No. T-282251 (M) Book No. 1412 Page No. 51

A parcel of land (Lot r, blk 10 of cons. subd. Plan Pcs-03-000613 being a portion of the cons. Lots 8-A & 8-B (LRC) Psd-223282, LRC (GLRO) Rec. No. 11503) situated in the Bo. of San Jose (now Tungkong Manga) Mun. of Sta. Maria (now San Jose del Monte) Prov. of Bulacan. Bounded on the N., alongline 1-2 by lot 3; on the E., alongline 2-3 by lot 6 both of blk. 10; on the S., alongline 3-4 by Road lot 10 on the W., alongline 4-11 by lot 2, blk. 10 all of the cons. subd. plan. Beginning at a t.marked "1" on plan being S.62 deg. 58'E., 1075.81 m. from Mon 101 Tala Est. thence No. 86 degree. 31'E., 10.00 m. to pt. 2; thence S. 3 deg. 29'E., 12.00 m. top 3; thence S.86 deg. 31'W., 10.00 m. to pt. 4; thence N.13 deg. 29' W., 12.00 m. to pt. of beginning containing an area of ONE HUNDRED TWENTY (120) sq.m.

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of said Writ of Execution and in accordance with Rule 39, Section 15, of the Rules of Civil Procedure, the undersigned will SELL at public auction to the highest bidder for CASH and in Philippine Currency on December 11, 2002 at 10:30 o'clock in the morning or soon thereafter at the Office of the Clerk of Court, RTC Metro Manila the above-described property/realty in order to satisfy the said Writ of Execution, plus Sheriff's fees and expenses of sale.

Prospective bidders or buyers are hereby enjoined to investigate and verify for themselves the title of said realty encumbrances thereon, if any there be.

City of Manila, October 22, 2002.

FOR THE CLERK OF COURT AND
EX-OFICIO SHERIFF, MANILA
(Sgd.) CONRADO G. LAMANO
Deputy Sheriff IV

(PDI-Nov. 14 & 21, 2002)

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National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

AD NO. PD2002-24

Opening Date : November 29, 2002 - 9:00 AM
E-Bidding Date : December 5, 2002 - 9:00 AM

2002-24-01	**SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF FUEL (UNLEADED GASOLINE & DIESEL) conforms with the quality standards prescribe under RA#8749 Clean Air Act. (To be purchased thru Open-Ended Purchase Order for a period of 6 months starting January 2003.)**	**P5,290,000.00**

Interested parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor Bldg. 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Eligibility forms and bidding documents are available on **November 13, 2002** at the Accreditation, Bidding & IT Services, Procurement & Contracting Division, Materials Management Department upon payment of P50.00 per schedule which is non refundable and presentation of TIN/supplier's number (DCE).

Issuance of eligibility forms and bidding documents **mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.** For inquiries please call no. **921-2574**. Last day of issuance of bidding documents **November 22, 2002.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - Nov. 21 & 22. 2002)

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

NOTICE TO DEPOSITORS OF THE CLOSED RURAL BANK OF BATO (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

1. The Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC) will resume receiving and processing claims for payment of insured deposits in the closed Rural Bank of Bato, Inc. Our representatives are stationed at the closed Rural Bank of Rinconada (Iriga City), Inc. to accept and settle claims and entertain queries of depositors from November 22, 2002 to December 5, 2002. After December 5, 2002, depositors may file their claims by mail addressed to -

   The Manager
   Claims Processing Department
   Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation
   2228 Chino Roces Avenue
   1231 Makati City

   PDIC representatives shall service claims and entertain queries from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Mondays thru Fridays.
2. Depositors are advised to present the following requirements to the PDIC representatives when filing their claims for insured deposits:
   a. Original evidence of deposit (i.e. savings passbook and/or certificate of time deposits).
   b. Two (2) latest identification cards/documents (IDs) with depositor's specimen signature.

   Other documents maybe required by the PDIC representatives in the course of claims processing.
3. Depositors of the closed Rural Bank of Bato, Inc. shall have until **February 19, 2003** to file their claims for insured deposits. After **February 19, 2003**, PDIC as insurer shall no longer accept any claim for insured deposits maintained with the subject bank.

PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

(PDI - Nov. 21 & 22, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
SPECIAL DRUG AND COMMERCIAL COURT
Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

IN THE MATTER OF PETITIONER FOR THE DECLARATION OF STATE OF SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS WITH APPROVAL OF PROPOSED REHABILITATION PLAN,

SPEC. PRO. NO. 2002-095

NISSAN SPECIALIST SALES CORP.
Petitioners.
x---x

ORDER

When called this afternoon for initial hearing, petitioner, through counsel, manifested that it has complied with the jurisdictional requirement by publishing the Stay Order issued by this court on September 16, 2002 in two newspapers of General Circulation and in support thereof submitted an affidavit of publication of the resident publisher of Mindanao Gold Star Daily marked as Exh. "A" and the copy of the publication on its issue on October 5, 2002 where the stay order was published on page 11 thereof marked Exh. "B" as well as a copy of its issued on September 28, 2002 on page 4 thereof where the stay order was published marked Exh. "C".

On the other hand, creditor Bank of the Philippine Island, through counsel, vehemently opposed that petitioner has complied with the jurisdictional requirement by publishing the Stay Order in the newspaper of the general circulation in the Philippines for it only published the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in Mindanao particularly Gold Star Daily which indeed an affidavit of publication of the publisher resident admitted that the Gold Star is newspaper of general circulation in Mindanao thereby failing to comply with the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation particularly Rule 3, Section 1 thereof in relation to Rule 4, Section 6 which states under paragraph "(h) directing the petitioner to publish the Stay Order in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines o[illegible] week for two (2) consecutive weeks;"

Petitioner admitted the rules on publication but requested that in the event that the court would decide on its non-compliance of jurisdictional requirement, it moved to be allowed to republish the same to comply with the jurisdictional requirement considering the liberal construction of the rules particularly Rule 2, Section 2 thereof.

Upon thorough evaluation of the issue involved, the court finds that the petitioner indeed failed to comply with the jurisdictional requirement of publication of the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Consequently, the manifestation of the petitioner that it has complied with the jurisdictional requirement as evidenced by Exhs. "A", "B" and "C" is hereby denied.

However, in order to liberally construe the provision in the Interim Rules, the petitioner is hereby allowed to republish the Stay Order in the newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

To give ample time to the petitioner to republish the Stay Order, let the initial trial of this case be reset to December 12, 2002 at 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon.

The manifestation of creditors, Universal Motors Corporation, Bank of the Philippine Island, Security Bank and RCBC with respect to their Motion for Leave of Court to file opposition to the Petition will be resolved during the initial hearing of the republished Stay Order.

Parties are notified in open court.

SO ORDERED.

Dictated in open court, this 13th day of November, 2002 at Cagayan de Oro City.

(Sgd.) **EPIFANIO T. NACAYA, CESO V**
Presiding Judge

ETN/rpp

(Sgd.) **ATTY. MA. THERESA ABAN-CAMANNONG**
Clerk of Court V
RTC, Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

—o0o—

Republic of the Philippines
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
SPECIAL DRUGS AND COMMERCIAL COURT
10th Judicial Region
BRANCH 40
Cagayan de Oro City

IN THE MATTER OF PETITION FOR THE DECLARATION OF STATE OF SUSPENSION OF PAYMENTS WITH APPROVAL OF PROPOSED REHABILITATION PLAN,

SPEC. PRO. 2002-095

NISSAN SPECIALIST SALES CORP.
Petitioner.
x---x

STAY ORDER

Before this court is a Petition for Rehabilitation and for the Declaration of State of Suspension of Payments with Approval of Proposed Rehabilitation Plan filed by petitioner Nissan Specialist Sales Corporation, with principal place of business at Carmen, Cagayan de Oro City.

Finding the petition to be sufficient in form and substance, the court hereby issues this Stay Order pursuant to Section 6, Rule 4, Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation reprinting compliance with the following terms and conditions, to wit:

a) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by the court action or otherwise, against the debtor, its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with the debtor;

b) Prohibiting the debtor from selling, encumbering, transferring, or disposing in any manner any of its properties except in the ordinary course of business;

c) Prohibiting the debtor from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as of the date of filling of the petition,

d) Prohibiting the debtor's suppliers of goods or services from with holding supply of goods and services in the ordinary course of business for as long as the debtor makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this stay order,

e) Directing the payment in full of all administrative expenses incurred after the issuance of this stay order,

f) Directing all creditors and all interested parties (Including the Securities and Exchange Commission) to file and serve on the debtor a verified comment on or oppostion to the petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing and putting them on notice that their failure to do so will bar them from participating in the proceedings; and;

g) Directing the creditors and interested parties to secure from the court copies of the petition and its annexes within such time as to enable themselves to file their comment on or opposition to the petition and to prepare for the initial hearing of the petition.

h) The encashments or deposits of the following checks are hereby ordered stayed.

To Far East Bank

NAME OF BANK	CHECK NO.	DATE	AMOUNT
1. BPI	66432	6-10-01	P 185,000.00
2. BPI	66433	7-10-01	185,000.00
3. BPI	66434	8-10-01	185,000.00
4. BPI	66435	9-10-01	185,000.00
5. BPI	66436	10-10-01	185,000.00
6. BPI	66437	11-10-01	185,000.00
7. BPI	66438	12-10-01	185,000.00
8. BPI	66439	1-10-02	185,000.00
9. BPI	66440	2-10-02	185,000.00
10. BPI	66441	3-10-02	185,000.00
11. BPI	66442	4-10-02	185,000.00
12. BPI	66443	5-10-02	185,000.00
To Security Bank			
1. BPI	74885	9-20-02	100,000.00
2. BPI	74886	10-20-02	100,000.00
3. BPI	74888	11-20-02	100,000.00
4. BPI	74889	12-20-02	100,000.00

i) MR. MANUEL Q. ANO-OS of Philbanking Village, New Society, Apopong, General Santos City is hereby appointed as REHABILITATION RECEIVER of the petitioner and his bond is fixed at ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS.

Pursuant to Section 7, Rule 4 of the aforesaid Interim Rules, the petitioner is hereby directed to immediately serve a copy of this Stay Order on the Rehabilitation Receiver appointed by this court, who shall manifest his acceptance or non-acceptance of his appointment not later than ten (10) days from receipt of this Order and put up his bond within the same period.

The petitioner is likewise directed to publish this Stay Order in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks before the scheduled initial hearing.

The initial hearing on the petition is hereby fixed on November 6, 2002 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning.

SO ORDERED.

Cagayan de Oro City, September 16, 2002.

(Sgd.) **HON. EPIFANIO T. NACAYA, CESO V**
Presiding Judge

(Sgd) **ATTY. MA. THERESA ABAN-CAMANNONG**
Clerk of Court V
RTU, Branch 40
Cagayan de Oro City

(PDI--Nov. 21 & 28, 2002)

PHILIPPINE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK, INC.

PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila
PRE-QUALIFICATION, BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND BID

The **PHILIPPINE POSTAL SAVINGS BANK, INC.** through its Pre-Qualification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) will accept applications for accreditation for the Bidding of the Bank's Security Services. The submission of bid documents will be on **November 27, 2002** and the Opening of Bids on **November 29, 2002**, at 2:00 p.m., respectively, at Philippine Postal Savings Bank Inc., 2nd Floor PostalBank Center, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

All bids must be submitted in a sealed envelope and shall be accompanied by Bidder's Bond equivalent to 10% of the total bid price in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check only. Accreditation fee of P500.00 (non-refundable) shall be collected from each applicant.

Interested bidders may secure bid documents including the Terms of Reference (TOR) from the Secretariat, 2nd Floor, PPSB Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

The Bank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defects or informalities contained therein or accept the offer/bid considered most advantageous to the bank.

For further information, please call the PBAC Secretariat at 5270057 or 5270142.

(Sgd.) **EDWIN A. REMODO**
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI--Nov. 19, 20 & 21, 2002)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites all interested Computer Maintenance Service Contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Maintenance and Servicing of the following IT equipment various brands, installed at its offices located at Metro Manila, Rizal and Cavite.

12 units Compaq Server
472 units Personal Computers and its peripherals
34 units Notebooks
449 units printers (Dot Matrix (80 col./132 col.), Deskjet, Laserjet, Bubblejet, Stylus)
4 units Line Printer
9 units Scanner
11 units UPS excluding battery
1 unit 21" Monitor

The schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

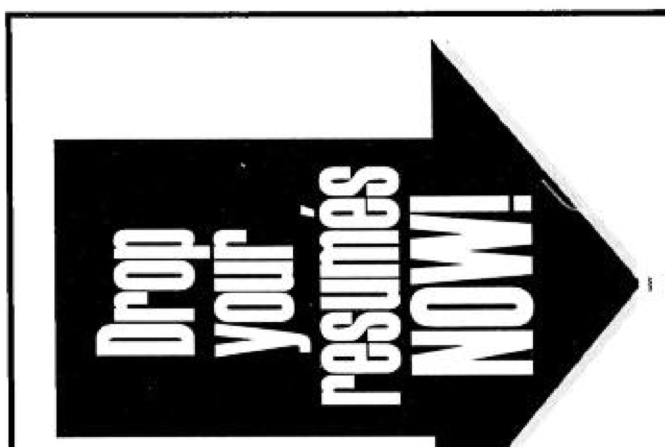
November 14-25, 2002	Issuance and Submission of Registration Requirements
November 28-29, 2002	Notification of Registered Bidders and Issuance of Bid Documents
December 2, 2002 (10:00 AM)	Pre-bidding Conference
December 17, 2002 (9:00-10:00 AM)	Submission of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals
(10:45 AM)	Opening of Eligibility Requirements and Bid Proposals

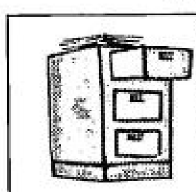
Registration and eligibility requirements can be secured from and submitted to BAC Secretariat, ODAFA, 7th Floor Matimyas Building, 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City. Bidding documents may likewise be secured from BAC Secretariat and the same shall be issued to duly registered bidders upon payment of P2,000.00, non-refundable fee. The approved budget for the Contract is P1.5M.

NFA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY/INFORMALITY OF THE BIDS RECEIVED AND TO ACCEPT ONLY SUCH BIDS WHICH ARE ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY.

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator & Chairman, BAC

(PDI--Nov. 14 & 21, 2002)





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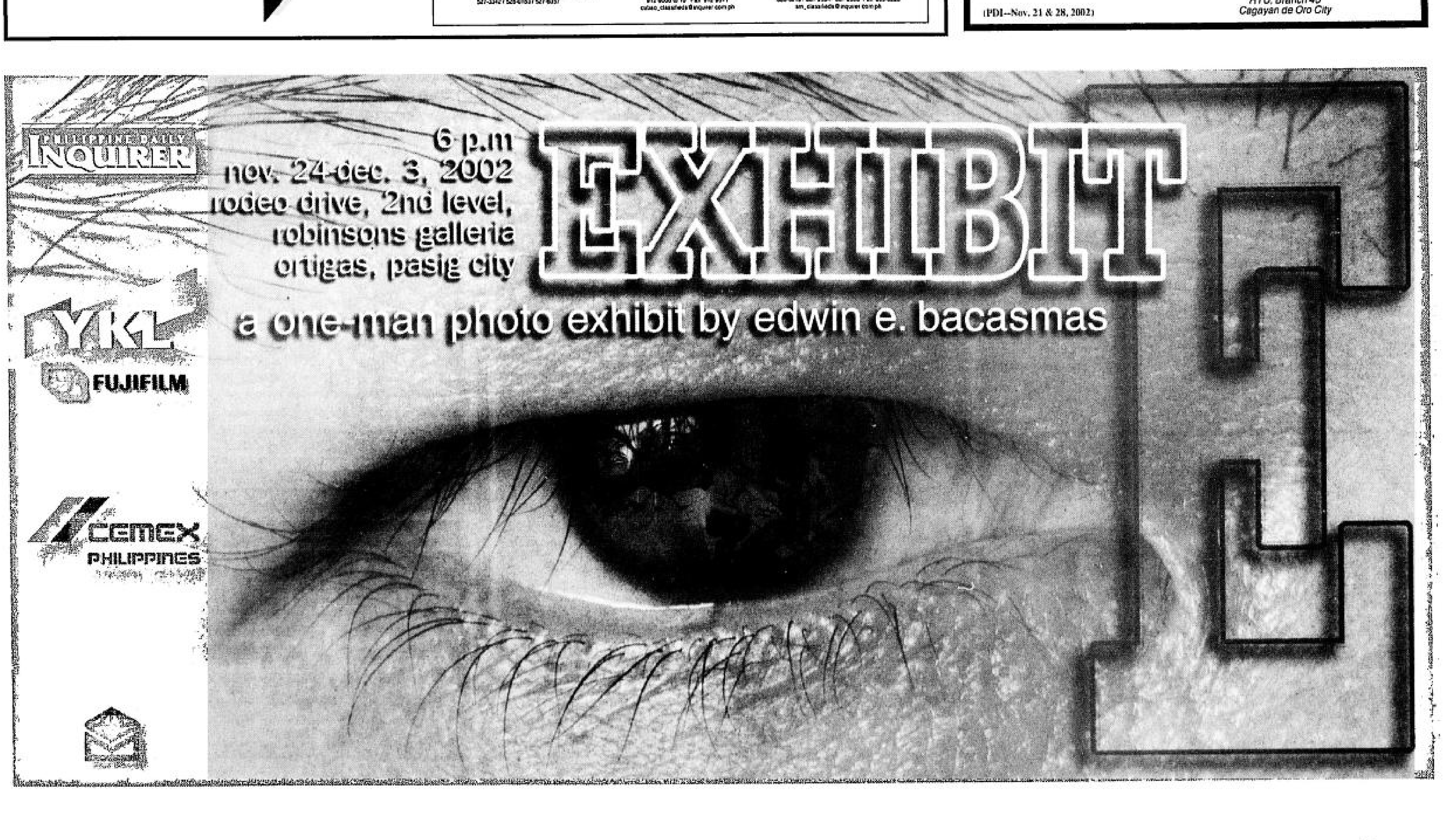

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OBITUARIES

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Remberto Manalo Calilung

Peacefully joined his Creator
on the 19th day of November 2002
at the age of 69.

His wife **Belen**; loving children and in-laws **Ronald & Elisa, Melody & Jeff, Beng & Roy, Lady & Jong**; grandchildren **Anne, Jason, Joshua, Patricia & Jay-Jay**; brothers and sisters **Amor** (†), **Natividad, Arturo, Eleuterio Jr. & Merilyn**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at St. Joseph Chapel of the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels in Sucat, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 23, 2002 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Parañaque City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

DR. RUBEN M. GALANG, JR.

of Amparo Subdivision, Novaliches
& Naga City, Camarines Sur

Peacefully joined our Lord on November 19, 2002
at the age of 61.

His brothers **Ramon, Rene Antonio & Ronaldo**; sisters **Remedios Deato & Regina Reyes;** children and grandchildren, loved ones, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on November 24 (a.m.) at the Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine Doña Juana Rodriguez Ave., Broadway New Manila, Quezon City.

In Loving Memory

on the First Death Anniversary of

ENGR. DAVID GUZMAN BAUTISTA

who passed away on November 23, 2001.

All relatives and friends are invited to join in celebrating his memory with prayers and dinner at the family residence in Quezon City, Friday, November 22, 2002 at 6:00 p.m.

Masses will be offered on November 23, 2002 at 6:00 p.m. at the following churches: San Pedro Bautista, Sto. Domingo and St. Jude.

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

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KALAW — **528-0213, 527-3342**
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"Who shall find
a valiant woman?
Far and from the outermost
coast is the price of her."
(Proverbs 31:10)

Anna Margarita Villaseñor Mercado

(12 September 1969-19 November 2002)

Thank you, Lord, for Aimee, a truly valiant woman.

In her brief life, she was a peerless gift to her husband MIGUEL, to her son LUIS and her daughter ROCIO; to her parents NOEL and CARMELA; to her sister POTEET and her brother-in-law TIGER, to her parents-in-law, TONY(+) & MONINA ALLAREY MERCADO, and the MERCADO family. She was a gift to her friends and kin, numerous and deep in their love for her.

Aimee brought us joy, beauty and laughter. She showed us courage and valor amidst pain. She taught us to trust the will of God as the infinite loving will of the Father in whose embrace she now rests--no more tears, no more pain, only Love.

Thank you, Lord, for showing us your love in Aimee and in the affection of our kindred and friends in Bangkok and Manila, throughout her illness and now at her wake and funeral.

WAKE
In Bangkok: Church of the Holy Redeemer at Ruam Rudee,
Tuesday, 19 November to Friday, 22 November 2002
In Manila: Capilla dela Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati,
Saturday, 23 November to Tuesday, 26 November 2002

FUNERAL MASS
9:00 AM, 26 November 2002, Santuario de San Antonio Parish Church

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family and relatives of the late

RAMON C. LOZON

who joined his Creator on November 13, 2002.

Sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and condoled with us in our moment of grief.

ENG. CRISPIN JAVIER RIVERA

Born in Alaminos, Laguna and past away in Canada.

He was seventy-seven and will be missed by his wife, 7 children, 4 children-in-law, 10 grandchildren, 4 siblings, and lots of relatives and friends.

"You will forever be in our hearts."

RIZALDY TADURAN ZSHORNACK

"ZALDY"

December 30, 1937 - November 19, 2002
of Caloocan City and BF Homes Parañaque

peacefully joined our Lord on November 19, 2002 at the age of 64.

His bereaved wife **Shirley Gorospe Zshornack**; children **Garizaldy**,**Geno** and **Kim**; grandchildren **Sabrina & Andrew**; brother **Ernesto**; sisters **Myrna, Nancy**, and **Lilia** other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Sampaloc Chapel, La Funeraria Paz (inside Manila Memorial Park) Sucat, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, November 24, 2002 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"From darkness let the light shine!"

Genesis 1:3

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Comparing car populations in 3 Asean capitals

JAKARTA—After visiting three Southeast Asian capitals, I now have an idea of the car populations in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Bangkok has the widest variety of car and truck makes and models since Thailand is the "Detroit of Asia" or the region's automobile production center. Toyota, Isuzu, Honda, Nissan, Mitsubishi, General Motors and Ford have manufacturing plants near Bangkok and you see many new or late-model BMWs, Mercedes-Benzes and Audis on the road.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

On Tuesday last week in Bangkok, Honda introduced its completely redesigned 1.5-liter i-DSI (intelligent dual and sequential ignition) 2003 City subcompact while arch rival Toyota is expected to launch before year's end the 2003 Vios to replace its Soluna subcompact.

Meanwhile, DaimlerChrysler was the largest single exhibitor at the Seventh German Technology Symposium and Exhibition held until Nov. 16 at Bangkok's Queen Sirikit National Convention Center. DaimlerChrysler, owner of the Mercedes-Benz brand, held a symposium on advanced automotive engineering and R&D last Thursday in the context of solving transport problems in Thailand, future energy supplies, the environment and recycling.

BMW Group Thailand, not to be outdone, brought in from Germany BMW's chief of design since 1992, Christopher Bangle, to give talks on new industrial design philosophies. The BMW Z4 roadster, which made its world premiere at the Paris Motor Show last September, was flown in for display during Bangle's design talks.

Malaysia's Proton

Over in Kuala Lumpur, the car population is dominated by various models of the national car, the Proton. Malaysia reportedly developed the Proton with automotive technology inputs from Mitsubishi, thus the engine of the 1.6-liter sedan is basically the same as that of a Lancer. However, while the Proton's engine is durable, the suspension system and the body fit and finish need improvement.

You see a lot more Proton cars than Japanese or European vehicles on the roads of Kuala Lumpur because Protons are priced almost 50 percent less than foreign cars. To encourage Malaysians to buy the national car, the government exempted the Proton from taxes and imposed a tariff ranging from 100 to 200 percent on foreign cars. The Toyota Corolla Altis, for example, costs the Malaysian ringgit equivalent of more than one million Philippine pesos while the Honda Civic is priced slightly lower than the Altis.

The ringgit or Malaysian dollar, after all, has the highest foreign exchange value among the three Asean countries: around 3.70 per one US dollar. But it's still a pity that competitively priced motor vehicles other than the Proton are not available for car buyers here since Malaysia has the finest and best-maintained roads and highways in Southeast Asia, except perhaps for Singapore. It's also in Malaysia that Sepang, the only Formula One race track in Asia, was built.

Indonesia's Kijang and Timor

While the Proton is king of the road in Kuala Lumpur, in Jakarta it's the Toyota Kijang (known as the Tamaraw FX/Revo in Manila). Other Asian utility vehicles (AUVs) abound in this Indonesian capital, such as the Isuzu Panther (the Hilander Crosswind in Manila), the Mitsubishi Kuda (Adventure in Manila) and the Daihatsu Taruna. Jakarta is recognized as the birthplace of the AUV since it was here that the first AUV, the Kijang, was developed and produced. Old models of the Kijang are used as minibuses, the same way the Revo is often used as a mega-taxi in Manila, but in Jakarta they are not air-conditioned and they are called "micro-lets."

You also see quite a few Honda CR-Vs in Jakarta although they cost at least 20 million rupiah more than the Kijang as the CR-V is not an AUV here, unlike in Manila. The Soluna, rather than the Corolla, is the most frequently seen Toyota compact car.

Don't be boggled by prices quoting hundreds of thousands of rupiah since one US dollar is equivalent to around 8,950 rupiah. So, tipping a waiter or porter would cost you 10,000 rupiah and a new car could cost more than 100 million rupiah.

During the Suharto era, Tommy Suharto, the Indonesian President's flamboyant son, tried to emulate Malaysia by launching a national car development project. However, the "national car" turned out to be the Kia Sephia, renamed as the Timor. Like in Malaysia, the national car was priced much lower than Japanese or European cars. This explains why the Kia Sephia, formerly known as the Timor, dominates the passenger car population in Indonesia.

Incidentally, in Bangkok and Jakarta as in Manila, the Zafira minivan carries the Chevrolet badge although it is really an Opel. On the other hand, the Blazer, which is known as a Chevy sport utility vehicle in the United States, carries the Opel marque in Jakarta. Why General Motors, which owns both Chevrolet and Opel, switches car marques in Southeast Asia is puzzling.

* * *

Send comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.

Circuit racing calendar to be launched

LOCAL motorsports will get a big boost with the launch of the 2003 Philippine Circuit Racing wall calendar at the Mustang Bar (Pasong Tamo) on Nov. 27 at 8 p.m.

Lucky Besa, the photographer behind this truly unique calendar, said the project stemmed from his passion for cars and his great respect for Filipino race car drivers.

Photographed at the Subic and Batangas racing circuits as they prepared for competition, or driving on the track, the race car drivers also welcomed Besa into their homes as well as places of work and leisure.

The result is images of the drivers as professionals, alongside their photos as family men and women, brothers, businessmen, golfer and remote control hobbyists.

JOJO Silverio, owner of Technocast Inc., maker of Rallye Aluminum Wheels, is among the circuit race personalities featured in the calendar.

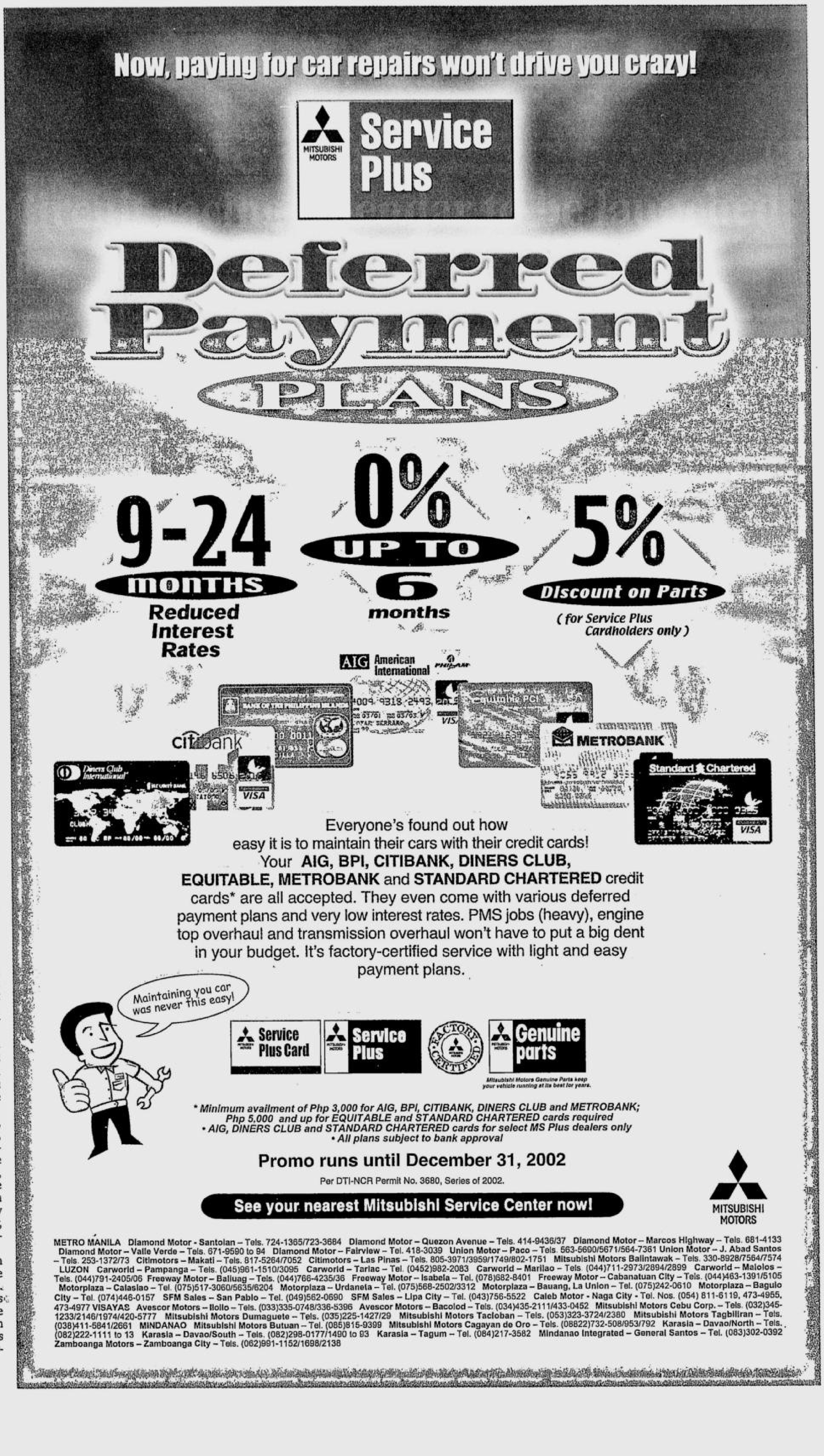
Prominent drivers featured in the calendar are Pocholo Ramirez, Jody Coseteng, Jojo Silverio, Mike Anton, Carlos Anton, Menchie Francisco, Cookie, Louis, George and Miguel Ramirez, Enzo Pastor, Pepon Marave, Mike Potenciano, JP Tuason and Gaby de la Merced. A schedule of the races for the year and a contact number for race updates form part of the calendar.

Corporate sponsors for Besa's calendar are Kodak, zed, Caltex-Autoplus, Glass Sentinal, Rallye Wheels Manufacturing, Red Horse Beer and Pinoy Toppings all gave their financial support for the production of the 2003 Philippine Circuit Racing wall calendar.

Given the backing from sponsors as well as earning the trust and respect of the race car drivers, Besa believes that the calendar is both a vehicle for helping to increase awareness, and harness commercial support for the local motorsports. Also, it is the fulfillment of his longtime dream.

"I've done photography work for magazines such as Mabuhay, Men's Zone and C!. I also worked on the Citibank coffee-table book. My portfolio includes brochures and annual reports. I've taken shots of people, infrastructure, food, etc. I figured it was about time I did something about my interest in cars and the country's race drivers. The calendar was a great idea. I am grateful that the drivers and those companies who lent their support thought it was, too," Besa said.

The 2003 Philippine Circuit Wall calendar will be available at the launch at Mustang and in auto detailing shops and at magazine stands.



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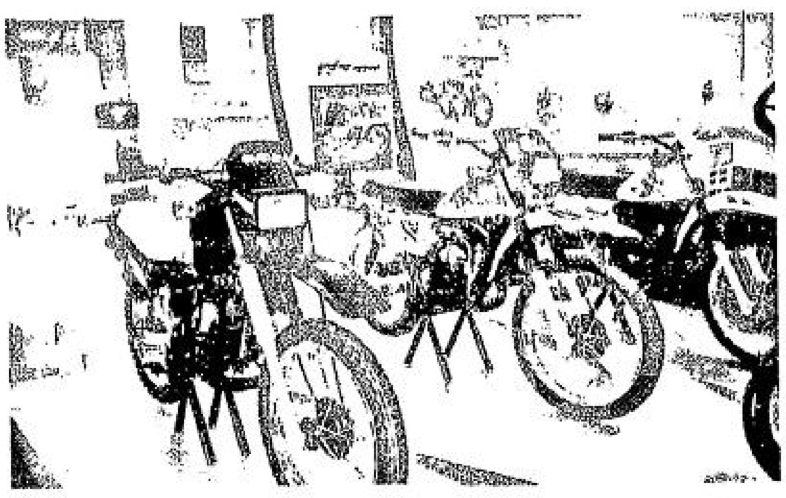
EYEING MARKET LEADERSHIP

Suzuki redraws mission

Text and photos by Charles Buban



SUZUKI Philippines shows off several ways on how to give its products prominent exposure in dealerships

KAWAHARA

WHAT happened in Lahug, Cebu, last week was no ordinary launch-a-new-product-treat-the-dealers type of company activity for Suzuki Philippines.

In a span of three days, the Japanese motorcycle manufacturer was able to send its message across: that it will no longer contend itself as just another name behind other motorcycle brands in the country.

Suzuki announced it has rekindled its mission to gain a sizable share of the local motorcycle market through a series of campaigns under the banner "New Beginnings."

"This phrase entails a lot of things: dealer network expansion, more product launchings, intensified public awareness campaign on motorcycle riding safety and advantage—in short we want to be at the forefront of the motorcycle industry," announced Suzuki Philippines president Kiyoshi Kawahara during the dealers convention held in Waterfront, Lahug, Cebu.

Great challenge

But bringing this 45-year-old company to the next level can be a challenge. Before Suzuki Philippines can touch the hearts of customers (and reach into their wallets), it has to win their minds.

That means selling the broadband vision to its Filipino customers who have been slow to embrace motorcycle as a means of transport other than cars.

This also means selling the vision to dealers, who may actually have to reconceive and reconfigure their stores to give ample exposure to Suzuki products.

"This is to maximize visibility of our product lineup and inform our consumers that the Suzuki brand is synonymous to high performance and cutting-edge technology," said Kawahara.

One step at a time

The company has given itself enough time to realize its vision, three years to be exact.

"By 2005 we hope to increase our present dealer network to around 80 to 100. This figure is also in line with our mission to gain a 21 percent market share nationwide within this timeframe," explained Benedict Martin Arreola, Suzuki Philippines marketing manager.

Based on the figures coming from the Motorcycle Development Program Participants Association, last year's total motorcycle sales in the country has reached 200,344 units.

The backbone or business type category comprised mainly of models for tricycles had the largest share with 66 percent.

Fast growing

But it is the underbone or cub type category that Suzuki pins its hope on. "While this category ranks only second with a share of 25 percent, it has exhibited tremendous sales growth in the past years," observed Arreola.

From total sales of 24,127 units in 1998, it reached 50,522 units last year, reflecting the market's warm reception to solo type bikes.

Out of the total industry sales of 161,447 units from January to September this year, the underbone category has increased 28 percent compared to the backbone category that has declined by 58 percent.

Smashing debut

This is why Suzuki Philippines is banking on its newest underbone model, the Suzuki Smash.

During the Smash launch in Cebu, Suzuki Philippines officers expressed confidence about their new product.

Priced just over P50,000, the Smash is especially built for the Southeast Asian market where the buyers put a great premium on value and style.

"The Deluxe and Standard variants seek to target both the high-end and low-end segments of the market and Suzuki Philippines is confident it can meet its sales target of 1,000 units a month," said Arreola.

According to its designers in Bangkok, Thailand, they interviewed several riders of various ages and applied all these in designing Suzuki Smash.

"As a result, Suzuki engineers were able to fine-tune Smash's design and specifications so it meets—and even exceeds—their riders' expectations," said Takeshi Imay, Suzuki regional manager who also planed in to grace last week's event.

Impression

Suzuki Smash's sharp body lines create an impression of aerodynamic efficiency.

"This concept will definitely appeal to our fashion-conscious youngsters and other riders who appreciate modern design," Imay added.

Powering Smash is Suzuki's latest 110cc 4-stroke engine that is lightweight and highly fuel efficient.

It features a rotary transmission that allows its rider to shift straight from the fourth gear to neutral (rather than shifting down through first gear) when bringing the Smash to a quick start.

"The Smash is just the beginning," said Takahashi. "There will be a lot more to expect from this company as we take on our quest to make Suzuki a name to consider when choosing a motorcycle."

Mercedes-Benz E-Class: Harmony in form

THE SPORTY and dynamic appearance of the new Mercedes-Benz E-Class is setting a new benchmark in technological advancement, excellence and occupant protection for saloon cars. For the new E-Class, Mercedes-Benz came up with a design principle where body lines and surfaces, stretching from front to rear, give the saloon car a look that is timeless and classic on the one hand, yet extremely powerful and superbly athletic on the other. The new E-Class captures the very essence of an elegant saloon like no other car and it has what it takes to become not only a best seller but also a long seller.

The E-Class traditionally has had the greatest impact on the development of the Mercedes-Benz brand. Customers buy an E-Class because of brand loyalty, reliability, safety, design, resale value, comfort, interior space and power delivery. This would also apply to the new E-Class buyer but now there is more emphasis on factors such as driving pleasure and design. The new E-Class blend of high quality and high tech assures customer loyalty and creates a level of prestige usually associated with the much higher-priced luxury cars.

Styling elements

The new E-Class draws from familiar styling elements, such as the classic twin headlamp face that is even more design-oriented and sportier than its predecessor in every respect. The new headlamps with a clear glass look merge into the hood contour and the front fenders to form a powerful arch, giving the new E-Class a more dynamic, progressive façade. From a styling perspective, the new E-Class stands out by virtue of a perfectly homogenous design that gives the car an extremely sophisticated allure without being overly "fashionable."

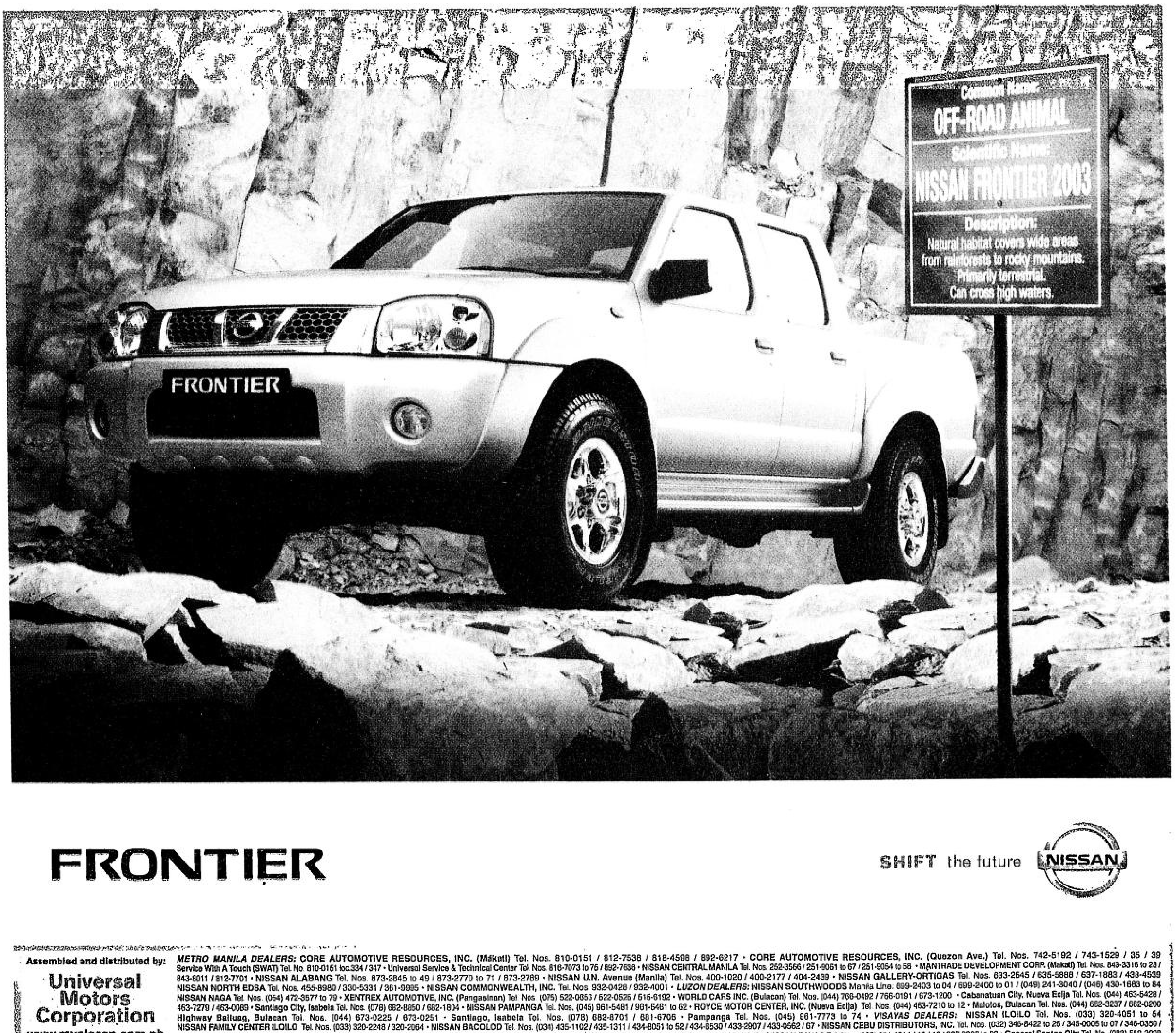
Developed at a cost of 2 billion Euros, the new E-Class has numerous technical innovations that set new standards in the areas of vehicle safety, comfort and handling dynamics. It redefines the standards in the automotive saloon category and assumes an exemplary position in all major engineering discipline.

Safety features

Unprecedented breakthroughs offered by no other automobile brand are now incorporated in the new E-Class, or are available in this vehicle class for the first time. One example of the technological exclusivity at the highest level is the electro-hydraulic braking system, Sensotronic Brake Control (SBC). Developed specially by Mercedes-Benz, with the SBC, the driver's brake command is transmitted electronically to a powerful microcomputer, which simultaneously process data on the current ride status from a variety of sensors, and uses this to calculate and meter the ideal brake pressure. Combined with the Electronic Stability Program (ESP), it ensures maximum handling, safety and help in emergency situations.

Mercedes-Benz has further optimized occupant safety with a newly developed, intelligent restraint system, which adapts to the current occupant and accident situation. In addition to adaptive front air bags, the new E-Class is for the first time equipped with two-stage belt force limiters and automatic weight classification for the front passenger. In combination with additional crash sensors, these systems provide occupant protection that is even more precise and adapted to specific accident situations. Side bags for the front passengers, large window bags, automatic child seat recognition and a rollover sensor are further components of the standard safety features.

Distributed locally by Commercial Motors Corp., two models are currently available in either silver or travertine beige, the gasoline powered E-240 Elegance and the diesel-powered E-220 CDI Elegance. Both come equipped with leather seats and the Elegance package which includes leather trimmed multifunction steering wheel, chrome highlights on the door handles and side paneling, stainless steel door, sill panels and light alloy wheels. Visit the CMC showroom for a test drive and experience a whole new dimension in driving pleasure.



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A tryst with Jenson Button, F1 driver

**Text and photos
by Tessa R. Salazar**

THE MACHINE claimed by Renault F1 event organizers at The Fort in Makati as the actual 600-kg Renault F1's R202

THE FACE you wouldn't want to see crashing on the wall

JENSON with the writer

LIKE somebody plucked out of a boy band, Brit Jenson Button, 22, created shrieks instead of tire screeches as soon as he set foot on Philippine soil.

F1 enthusiasts—male, female and otherwise—packed the Mild Seven F1 Renault party Nov. 9 at The Fort in Makati to catch a glimpse of one of the youngest current crop of Formula 1's winning drivers.

F1 superstar Jenson caused a stir in his Formula One debut for BMW Williams in 2000 when he rocketed to eighth place in the championship—becoming Britain's youngest Grand Prix driver ever.

He first got behind the wheel in the karting circuit at the age of 8. He had to start at the back of the grid because of his status as someone still wet behind the ears. Rain and the rest of the competition didn't stop Button from stepping at the top podium. Since then, Jenson had continuously won in karting and other racing championships. By the age of 10, Jenson was setting his sights on the FI circuit.

Jenson came to this country as a man facing a career crossroads. He is now in his last year with the Mild Seven Renault F1 Team (he will be joining Bar Honda in the 2003 season) where he finished 17th and seventh in the Driver's Championship, reaping points in Sepang, Interlagos, Imola, Nurburgring, Magny-Cours and Suzuka. He delighted Filipino enthusiasts with sparks of naughty remarks at the driving culture of the Philippines.

This writer was allowed a "circuit lap"—a 15-minute interview with Jenson at his Shangri-La Makati room. The first question that came to mind: "What was your closest brush with death?"

"Probably while crossing the street earlier on in Manila," was the straight-faced reply. And he didn't take that back.

Bloodlines

Jenson probably inherited his talent for deftly maneuvering powerful machines. He was the son of rallycross star John Button. But if you asked him, a lot more than bloodlines come into play when coming out on top at speeds in excess of 200 kph. Asked if he felt he should win races because his father was a successful rally cross champ, Jenson replied a flat "no."

"I never thought about that. I started karting when I was 8. He bought me a go-kart. We worked together. He was my mechanic to start with and I was driving. Fantastic."

He's the only son in the family. He said he has three older sisters, and in jest, two parents.

Back home, Jenson has a girlfriend waiting named Louise, and they've been going steady for two-and-a-half years.

Jenson reveals that racers have to be mentally and physically fit for racing. So he says he engages in a number of sports activities. He particularly enjoys cycling, canoeing, and jet skiing. He also says he likes watching movies in cinemas and dining out in nice restaurants.

But growing old in the racing circuit is a tricky question for him. Ultimately, he said he would quit "when he gets bored."

"I think I'll get bored before I get too old for Formula 1. I think I'll leave."

Jenson said that at the moment, he's enjoying what he's doing. "I've got a lot of things I want to achieve: winning and championships. I don't know how long I'll be around."

Of Schuey

Does he consider Michael Schumacher his toughest competitor? Jenson quickly said Mike wasn't really his competitor this year, what with the Ferrari team being too far ahead.

"He's very experienced. He's won five more championships. He just had to win. He's the most complete driver on the grid," he said.

So how does the serious Jenson Button feel when going head-to-head with the likes of Schuey or David Coulthard?

"It's just funny because one of my best friends on the circuit is David Coulthard." Aside from that, Jenson reveals he and David both come from the United Kingdom, both live in Monaco, and their homes, he said, "are quite close to each other."

"When I first arrived in F1, there was a very strange feeling being in the pit lane with people like Michael and having Michael come up to me and say 'good luck, just enjoy yourself.'"

Jenson said he soon got over that "strange feeling" and realized that F1 drivers are just normal people "living on the fast lanes."

He considers Michael his hero because "he's another driver I want to be."

Favorite circuits

His favorite circuit in the tour is Japan's Suzuka, saying that the track had "everything" and was a very exciting track to drive.

"It's very tough physically and mentally. The reactions (in the track) have to be so fast. (Suzuka) has really tough corners, which is good. Well, every F1 driver loves Japan, I think," he said followed by laughs.

His second favorite is Spa in Belgium. "Another challenging circuit," he opined.

He described his home circuit in England—Silverstone—as a very "flowing" circuit, and so is Malaysia's.

"They're all very fast and flowing quite wild. I don't like circuits that require first gear, second gear. I like to be at a flow and get some good speed."

He described the Monaco circuit as "tight and twisted" and "a very tough circuit to learn." "The arm curve, how close you can get to the arm curve and every lap you do you gain experience. It's very challenging."

Rally racing dreams

If given a choice, he would also want to try rally racing. "I've never driven a rally car but have been on one on a special stage. That was really pretty amazing. The machinery is also very good. A lot of people don't realize how much the car does. It's like Formula 1, the technology is fantastic," he said.

He'd also like to take on Nascar, which he believes would be a lot of fun.

Jenson also finds another exciting circuit, and probably the toughest one to crack: The Metro Manila circuit.

"The drivers and the roads are pretty crazy. There are cars everywhere. One time we were going down the street with cars coming on us on a one-way street. It looked pretty exciting," he said.

So, are our roads good enough to train F1 drivers? Jenson, with F1-like reflexes, pondered on the question for less than a split-second, and agreed, laughing.

Why I keep buying lotto tickets

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I WROTE this piece in the locker room of the Sta. Elena Golf Club. Know why? I had to rise up early (that's 5 a.m.) as Taby Tabaniag, Jake Ayson and I were requested to officiate the 11th Architects Golf Classic last Nov. 18. We just could not refuse such a nice guy like Sam Esguerra, the father of the tournament. Include Kado Gutierrez, the mustachioed architect whose love for the Beatles rivals that of Beatlemaniacs Vernon B. Sarne and Danny Isla, and Mon Mendoza, the president of the Architects Golf Club. It was Mon who spent nights with his pals to make sure this year's edition would be another smashing success.

Oh, well, people do the strangest things in the name of golf.

Taby, Jake and I were well within our target of reaching Sta. Elena in Laguna before 7 a.m. But a traffic jam hit the Southern Luzon Expressway at 6 a.m. due to a truck that got stalled near the toll gate at Villamor. We arrived past 7 a.m.

* * *

"Not to worry," said Sam via text messaging as he had teed off when we arrived in the company of, among others, Dr. Daboy del Carmen of BMG Solar Heater. "Have your coffee, take your breakfast, relax. Everything's under control."

I texted back: "Good luck. Hope you win the Chevy Venture. But if you don't, enjoy the sun, the scenery."

Because Sam is a dear, dear pal, I did not hesitate to add: "If you fail to win the Venture at the designated hole-in-one green, come back next year and ... play it again, Sam." Sam is golf's Humphrey Bogart, you know.

* * *

Here's a toast to Isuzu Philippines Corp. for landing first and third in a fuel-efficiency contest staged on Nov. 10 by the Department of Energy on Asian utility vehicles (AUVs).

Isuzu's best-selling Hi-Lander Crosswind XTO (2.5-liter diesel engine and manual transmission) won the best fuel-efficiency record of 19.198 km to a liter, with the Crosswind XT clinching third with 17.122 km to a liter. Mitsubishi Adventure (2.5-liter diesel engine and manual transmission) was second at 17.509 km to a liter.

Toru Koyasu, Isuzu president, received the plaque of appreciation after DOE Secretary Vince S. Perez Jr. announced the results in the company of Mayor Peter Oliver M. Palacio of Calatagan, where the fuel test ended after the take-off point at Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Also present was Batangas Vice Gov. Peter Perez Laurel.

* * *

Congratulations to the eighth year of Volvo's presence in the country through the Scandinavian Motors Corp. (SMC) and Viking Cars Inc. (VCI). SMC is the authorized importer of Volvo cars while VCI is the authorized dealer of Sweden's world-renowned vehicles.

Its debut here in 1994 was a big hit. Unleashing 2,000 passenger cars that year, Volvo scored a 66 percent market share in the luxury car segment—a no mean feat indeed for a European car having its baptism of fire in a country dominated by Japanese-made cars.

The following year, Volvo registered a modest 15 percent growth. But before that, SMC and VCI were also honored with the "Volvo Diamond Award" by Volvo Car International as the best importer, beating 23 countries in the areas of vehicle sales, parts and service operations, competitive positioning and customer satisfaction.

* * *

"I take pride in being a part of this great organization," said Albert Arcilla, the amiable lawyer-executive of Volvo. "And to our patrons, they truly represent some of the best breed from our society. I doff my hat to them."

Albert credits Lyn (Manalansang) for the consistently splendid showing of Volvo. And this is not to exclude, of course, Rose Dimalanta—also a bigwig whose contributions to Volvo's steady stature can never be quantified.

In conjunction with Volvo's eighth anniversary in the country, ongoing at the posh Tower Club in Makati's Philamlife is the Viking Feast—a celebration of Sweden's world-famed cuisine.

* * *

Do you know that Volvo was born in 1924? OK, here's a bit more of Volvo history.

At a crayfish party in Gottenborg, Sweden, in 1924, Assar Gabrielsson and Gustaf Larson partook of a huge plate of crayfish and, a few hours later, the company that would be known as Volvo was born. Their battle cry: Build a car whose primary feature is safety. With safety came excellence.

Currently in the country, Volvo ranks second overall in the Category 3 luxury car segment and first in the large car class ranging P2 million and above.

* * *

Since 1994, Volvo has launched 13 models in the country. Its latest, the S60, tops the bestseller list followed closely by the S40 2.0 A/T, the S80 2.0 A/T and the ruggedly versatile XC70 Cross Country. To date, the S80 luxury sedans and S60 sports sedans have sold around 200 units each while 45 units of the XC Cross Country are owned by some of the nation's well-heeled.

This month, the new Volvo S40 and V40 T4 will hit the road. The company's newest showroom, the Volvo Ortigas Center, will open on Dec. 5 and, as a special 75th anniversary promo, Volvo cars are offered at "Special Anniversary Prices" with low down payment and financing packages.

Volvo is one reason I have not stopped buying lotto tickets.

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SVX MT Model

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30%	239,500
40%	326,000
50%	412,500

ZERO Interest
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Model	SRP	50% DP	Monthly
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MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Less may mean more for this entry-level car

By Tessa R. Salazar

A BIT of spice in thė world of the entry-level cars doesn't seem to exist in this corner of the world. Entry-level cars are supposed to be bland and simple-ho-hum appearances to match equally boring performances. These aren't your "trophy cars" you would want to brag about. After all, entry-level cars are meant more for fleet accounts, where quantity counts more than personal quality.

And entry-level cars are, almost always, defined by their 1.3-liter engines.

So why does the 1.3-liter entry-level car always get left out in the looks and technology department, and why is our attention captured by 1.6 liters and up? Data show that of the over 18,000 passenger cars sold from January to October 2002, about 4,000 were 1.3-liter cars, a 25-percent share.

With these figures staring at us in the face, why would anyone dare to rock the boat and challenge accepted facts of life? If someone were to put some spice in a bland 1.3-liter entry-level car, such as upgrading the looks and power to match its 1.6-liter counterpart, can the price tags be kept from jumping up as well?

The makers of Nissan cars are either bored to death from seeing the same old stock coming out of their assembly plants, or have been jolted by creative inspiration. Either way, industry pundits better take note of what Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. has in store for the very near future. The Sentra GX will soon be launched in the Philippines. So, what else is new? Nothing. Just that Nissan claims it has put some of the technology and appearance of the 1.6 Sentra Exalta in this 1.3-liter car. Like pulling an elephant out of a hat, huh?

We wonder how Nissan did it. Risking preempting the Sentra GX launch, we reveal some details here. The Sentra GX would have a multilink beam suspension, power of 95 ps, torque of 12.5 Nm/4,400 rpm; a QG engine (QG13DE); a two-tone interior (the only one in its class); and alloy wheels (for the A/T).

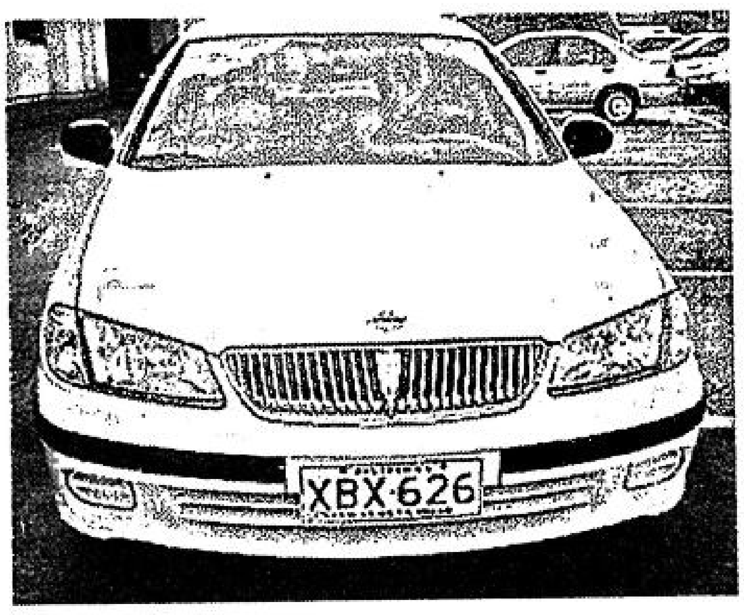
But the displacement, of course, would remain at 1300 cc. The vehicle's power to weight ratio is said to be much better.

The whole idea behind the product is to put a stylish, high-performance car within the price range of the usual 1.3-liter market. The Sentra GX remains in line with the Nissan strategic brand realignment. As the global Nissan switches image, this is first reflected in the products launched and the improvements in the dealerships and showrooms as well as in customer service.

But don't get too worked up. Though it has borrowed some of the ambiance, feel and amenities of the 1.6-liter class, it still doesn't have power windows or power side mirrors. The price range would be about P500,000 to P600,000 for the M/T—much within the premium price range of the 1.3-liter class.

Colors would not be limited to the usual white or blue or red. This car promises to come out with all the colors available—about 7 to 8 of them—the same color lineup of the Sentra Exalta.

Nissan brings in a premium image to the entry-level market with the Sentra GX. It claims that no other vehicle in this market segment offers alloy wheels and automatic transmission.



OUR mobile spy spots two Sentra GX—one maroon and the other white—parked somewhere in Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Nissan's entry-level cars have high running rates here. About 89 percent of them are still running (based on LTO registrations). Though it has the heritage of durability, the previous Sentra LEC suffered from rear shock absorber problems. That, assures Nissan, has been corrected and this model is claimed to have one of the highest engineering standards—for the 1.3-liter segment, that is.

Nissan's current entry-level market cars are the Sentra LEC 1.3 (and subsequent LEC PS) and the Sentra FE (Fleet Edition). The Sentra LEC PS (Light Economy Car) was the first entry-level car with power steering. About 7,000 Sentra LEC PS units have been sold since it was launched. Average annual sales is placed at 1,500 units.

Will Filipino motorists, price- and fashion-conscious buyers that they are, buy into this innovation? We'll have to see the real deal first before judging the book by its cover, or whatever.

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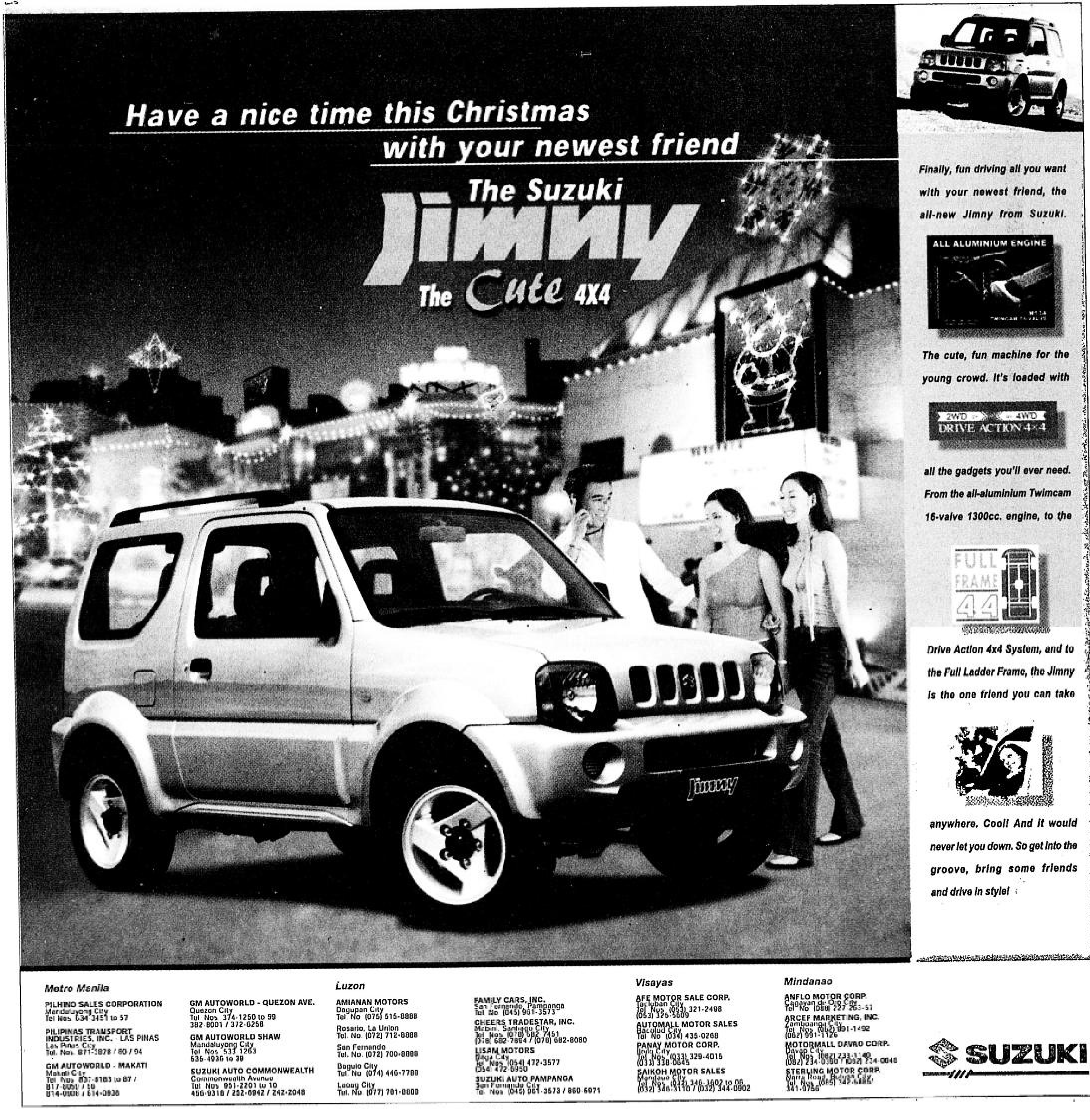
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I SAY Tomato, You Say Tomato (Tomato soup with crushed tomatoes, garlic, basil, onion and fried basil)

Moving Kitchen

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Roger Carpio

KITCHEN has moved from Greenbelt 1 to Greenbelt 3 in Ayala Center, Makati. To craft an edge on the competition, it has recreated its menu, introduced new dishes and redesigned the 120-seater restaurant.

The goal is to move up a notch from other casual restaurants, but the restaurant's emphasis on value remains.

"Management is changing the market of Greenbelt 1. Besides, Greenbelt 3 is a prime spot," explains Ricco Ocampo of the move. Ocampo co-owns Kitchen with pal Rikki Dee.

Ocampo and Dee have also hired new chefs—Gilbert Pangilinan and Rex Soriano—who are fresh graduates of the Culinary Institute of America in New York. "For three months, they will help recreate and enhance Kitchen's menu and improve its system," said Ocampo. "A restaurant needs rejuvenation. There's that constant challenge to improve it."

First venture

It so happens Kitchen has a special place in Ocampo's heart for "it's my first venture into the food business."

Almost two years since it opened, Kitchen has gathered a following as devoted to its simple, unpretentious cooking as to its caring service and fun atmosphere.

Even at its busiest, this establishment still exudes a quiescence that's different from the energy just outside its door. With its parquetry and old bricks, the restaurant's interior only enhances the impression that this place is designed for recharging, that its mission is not just to feed but relax you as well.

With its antique decorations and mellow music softening the din of the lunch or dinner rush, Kitchen manages to massage even the most stressed-out patron into a state of serenity.

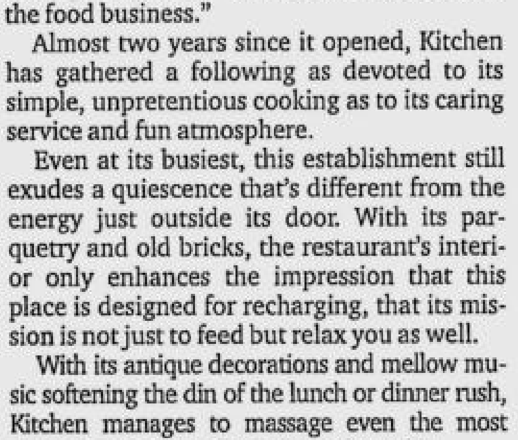
"Most restaurants look new when they open. Personally, I like to give my restaurants a rundown look, like they've been there for a long time. I like that feeling," says Ocampo, who admits to being a frustrated designer. He designed Kitchen himself. His collection of Neal Oshima black-and-white photos is displayed at the restaurant. The rest of the decorations were bought from second-hand stores. "In all my endeavors, I make it a point to give my creative input. Otherwise, I'll get bored," says Ocampo.

Comfort food

Less about impressing or overwhelming, the cooking at Kitchen aims to soothe and nourish, not jump up and down and announce itself, despite the names of the dishes. Call it comfort food.

I Say Tomato, You Say Tomato, a rich tomato soup with crushed tomatoes, garlic, basil, onion and fried basil, for instance, sings softly. Hail Caesar, mixed lettuce with Kitchen's own version of Caesar salad dressing and

MOVING/ C2



RICCO Ocampo designed the interiors.

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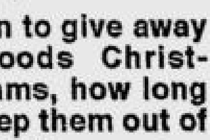
- Place the frozen ham in the gift box only coupon arrival at delivery point and include a note that tells the recipient to further freeze the ham.
- DO NOT PRE-BAKE AND GARNISH YOUR HAM GIFT. This may seem like a wonderful idea but it is NEVER a safe practice.

Recipe

MERRY PEACHES N' PUREFOODS PEAR-SHAPED HAM

You will need:
1 PUREFOODS PEAR-SHAPED HAM
1 can preserved peaches, reserve ½ cup of syrup and slice the peaches
½ cup pineapple juice
1 cup brown sugar
1 star anise



Garnishing:
- Red and green cherries
- Red and green grapes
- Red apple
- Celery leaves or parsley

Here's how:
Combine reserved syrup, pineapple juice, brown sugar and star anise on a baking pan with the PUREFOODS PEAR-SHAPED HAM. Bake in a pre-heated oven at 375 degrees F for 15 minutes and baste with marinade twice while baking. Transfer baked ham in a serving platter and garnish with peach slices, cherries, grapes and celery leaves. Boil the remaining sauce until thick. Pour on top of the ham. Serves 8-10

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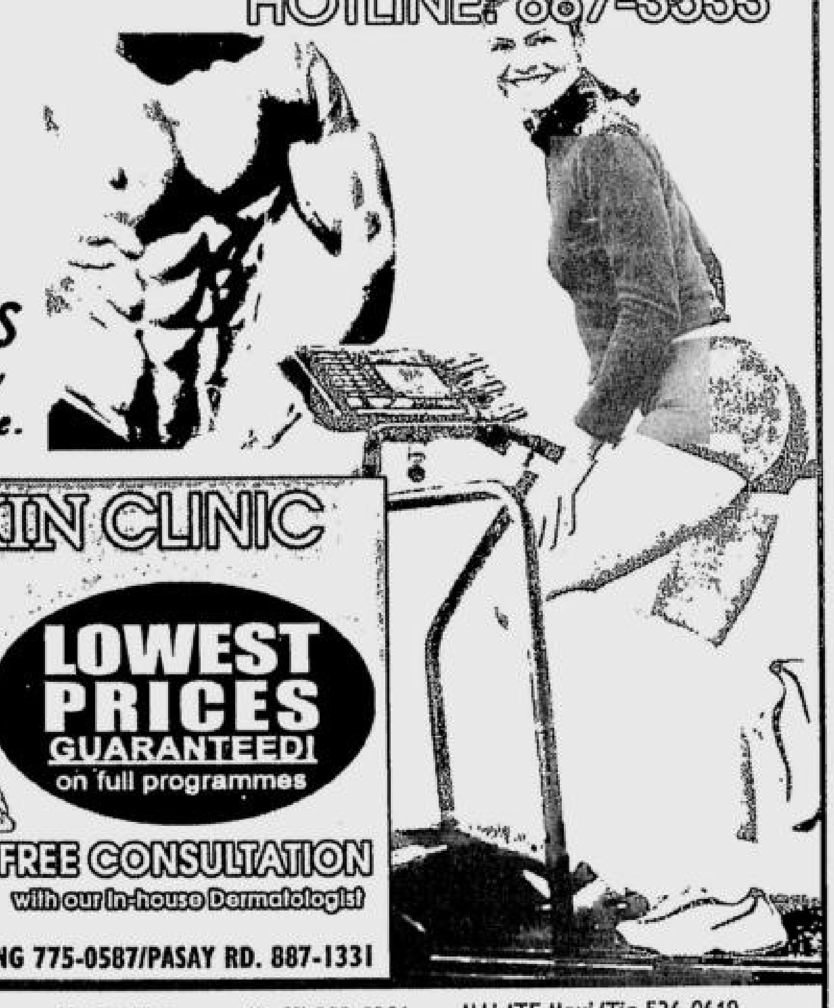

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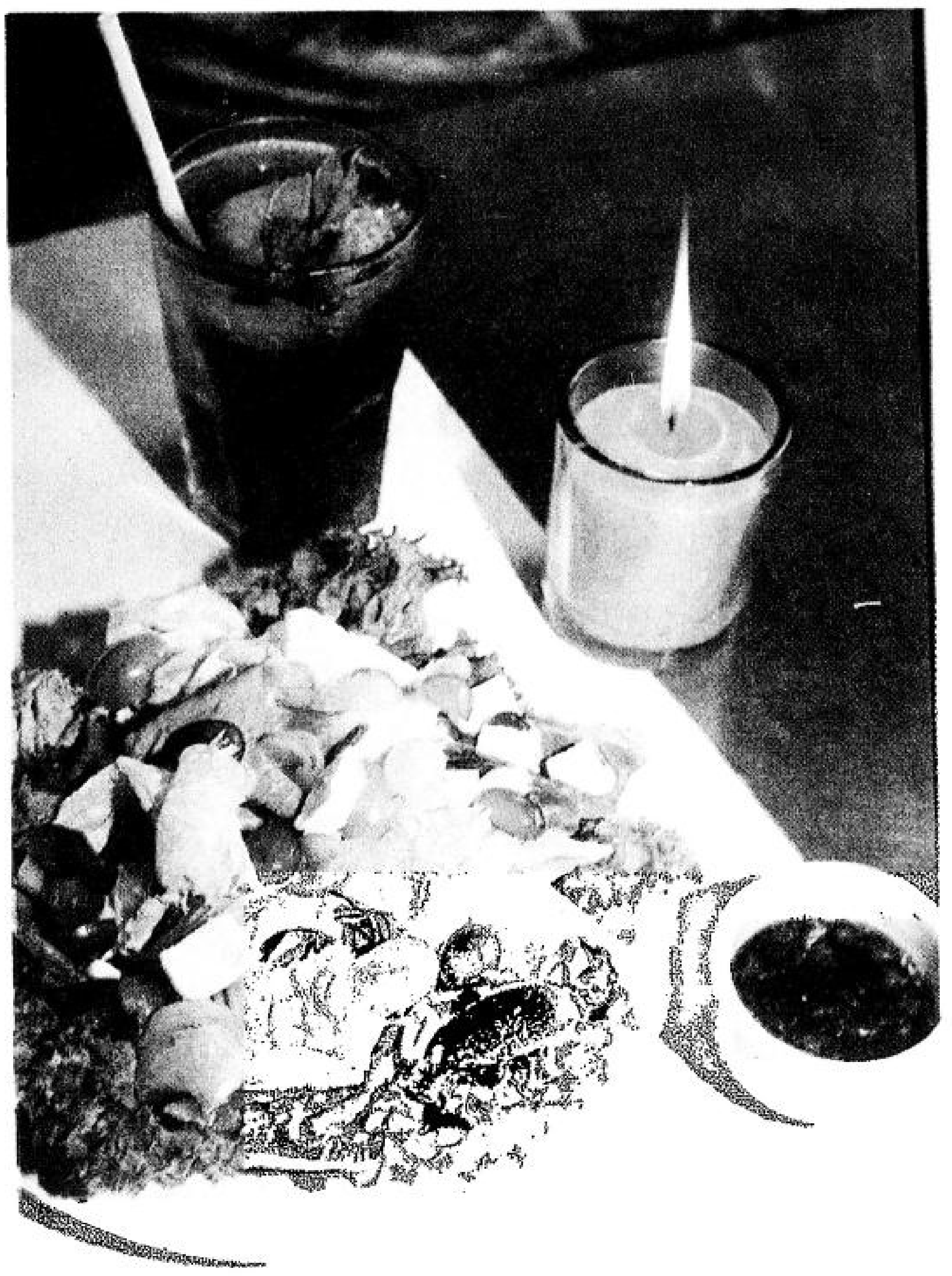


SALAD of grapes, pomelo, kesong puti, cashew, honey, vinaigrette dressing, capers

GRAND Slam (Butter pastry crusts layered with whipped cream and topped with chocolate shavings)

PARQUETRY and antique decor give Kitchen that old feeling.

Moving Kitchen

From page C1

pesto croutons, dances lightly. Salmon Says, salmon head cooked in miso fills you gently with still-crunchy vegetables.

For the final coda to meals, Kitchen offers new sweet creations. Ice Queen, strawberry refrigerator cake with butter filling and boiled meringue icing, is a recipe of Pin Cojuangco. Grand Slam, crunchy butter pastry crusts alternately layered with whipped cream topped with chocolate shavings, takes inspiration from Margarita Fores' recipe.

With a great demand for rice meals, Kitchen has also introduced "I Want Rice," a menu where it serves big plates of rice dishes.

It features On Barbie's Cue (combination of meat and seafood kebab with well-seasoned chicken, squid and beef), Too Good It's So True (pan-fried salmon belly laced with onions and Bistik Tagalog sauce), Sheepish Grin (two slices of lambchops dressed with brown sauce and red wine) and Loose Leggings (Hainanese quarter chicken leg with a convoy of soy sauce, chili and ginger sauce).

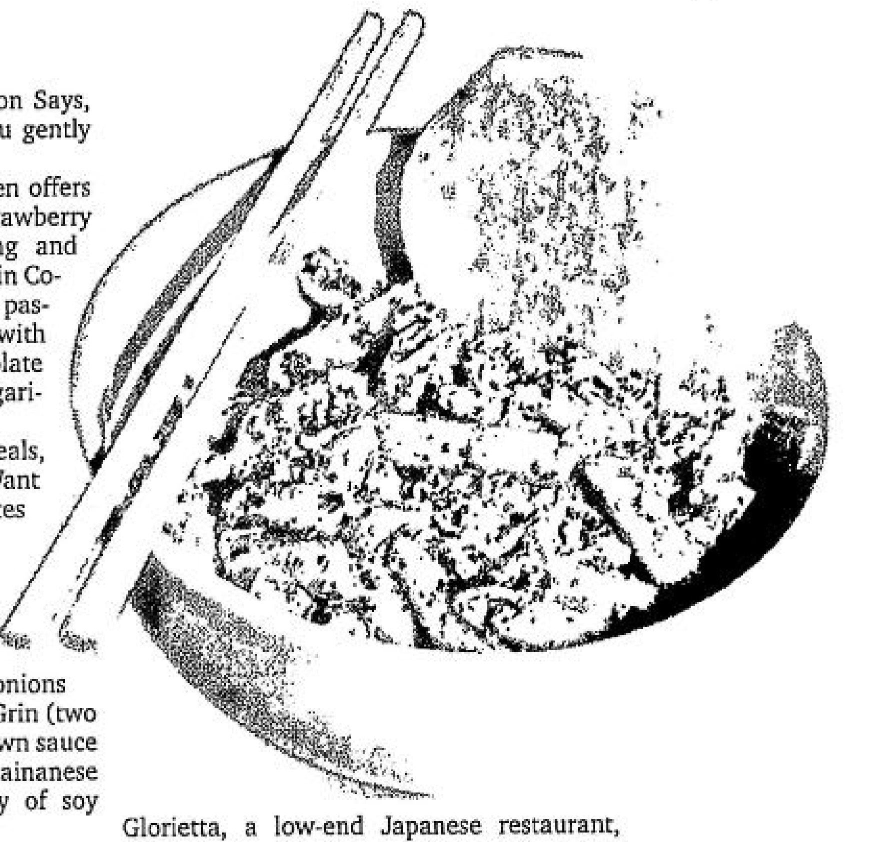
Diners can also bring home tasty Kitchen specialties such as Dulong, Stewed Tomato, Pesto, Sardines Pate, Wasabi Cream, Mustard Vinaigrette, Sesame Soy Dressing, Thai Vinaigrette, Garlic Mayo, Sourbill and Grilled Salmon Belly.

Indeed, Kitchen demonstrates how to invigorate with the allure of something new while still cradling with the familiar.

Ocampo recently opened next door to Kitchen a restaurant that serves a wide array of egg dishes. It is called Ebun, which is Pampango for "egg." He plans to open Osake at Glorietta, a low-end Japanese restaurant, which will serve grilled items, and another Japanese restaurant, which will be high-end and co-owned with Rikki Dee and Doris Ho.

Open from 10 a.m.-10 p.m. daily and on weekends until 12 mn, Kitchen Greenbelt (tels. 893-4232, 637-8025) is located at the G/F, Greenbelt 2, Ayala Center, Makati. Kitchen Megamall (687-4232 and 637-8025) is at the G/F, Mega Strip, Megamall B, Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas, Pasig.

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph



PESTO Maestro (Penne pasta with Kitchen's pesto and kesong puti)

ICE Queen (Strawberry cake with strawberry butter filling and boiled meringue icing)

Sunday lunch buffet offers restaurant's 15 best dishes

JUAN Miro Restaurant is now offering a Sunday lunch buffet, priced at P398 for adults and P198 for children below 4 ft in height. The buffet offers 15 of Juan Miro's best dishes, including pork piccata in curry sauce, chicken with soy and ginger sauce, fried tofu Miro style, stuffed shiitake mushrooms, abalone rice, as well as generous selections of sushi and sashimi, tempura and dessert. All buffet orders come with bottomless iced tea and coffee. Diners who avail of the Sunday lunch buffet this month get a 20-percent discount from their total food bill.

Juan Miro now serves daily bento lunch specials. Guests can choose the bento box that they want: chicken karaage (P150), makunouchi (P180), tonkatsu (P180), nigiri sushi (P190), beef teriyaki (P200), salmon teriyaki(P235) and unagi (P250).

It also has a selection of hot and cold soba and udon items. Hot noodle choices include shrimp tempura soba or udon (P225), kitsune (fried soy bean curds soba or udon, P180), tanuki (fried tempura butter) soba or udon (P165), kakiage soba or udon (P195), and unagi (grilled eel) soba or udon (P295). Cold noodle choices are zaru soba or udon (P150), tenzaru (served with shrimp tempura) soba or udon (P225), gomoku (served with a vegetables and egg crepe) soba or udon (P200) and cha soba or udon (P175).

As a special gift to its valued customers, the restaurant has a Pick-a-Chopstick promo that will give away prizes. For every P1,000 food purchase, a guest is entitled to pick a chopstick from a fish bowl. Each chopstick corresponds to a prize or gift, including a bento lunch special that the guest can avail of on his next visit.

Juan Miro Restaurant is at the 2/F, Millennium Place Bldg., corner Meralco and Julia Vargas Avenues, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Call 687-0880, telefax 687-3439.

Taste of Thailand

DINING OUT

KAM THAI offers a taste of Thailand. Selections include the Mussaman Curry, Dry Curry Pork, Thai's Chicken Curry, and Roasted Duck Curry. It also offers Chicken in Pandan, Pork Omelet, Thai Grilled Chicken and Mile Curried Mixed Veggies. There are Fried Garupa, Stir Fried Clams with Chili Sauce, Dry Prawn Curry and Crab in Curry Sauce. There is the Bagoong Rice and the Kam Special noodles. Kam Thai is at South Road (T.M. Kalaw) corner Parade Street, Luneta Park, Ermita, Manila.

WESTIN PHILIPPINE PLAZA'S China Sea restaurant offers an a la carte menu of vegetarian specialties until Nov. 30. The offerings include Braised Wintermelon Soup with Bamboo Pith, Steamed Vegetable Roll with Mushroom, Fried Crispy Taro Roll, Stewed Vegetarian Noodles and Fried Garoupa made from Taro with Sweet and Sour Sauce. Call 551-5555 local 1528 or 1530.

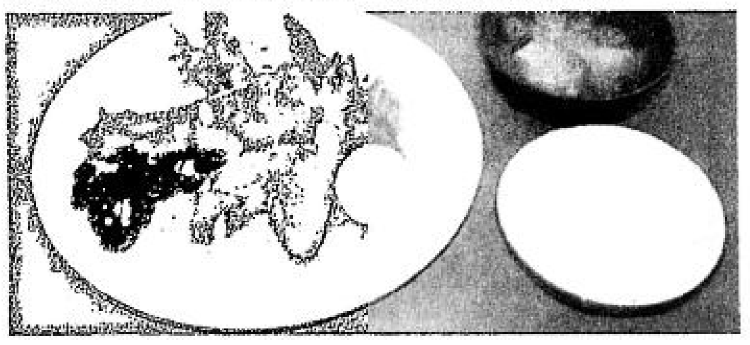
EDSA SHANGRI-LA'S Paparazzi presents "Succulent Oysters until Nov.30. Available for dinner are Rockefeller oysters (baked with spices and bread crumbs), Kilpatrick style (baked with minced bacon on top), and Shooters (placed into a shot glass with cocktail sauce and horseradish, topped with vodka). At Summer Palace, diners can try the "Shanghai Surprise" until Nov. 30. Try Pork Belly with Pachoy, Sea Cucumber with Shrimp Roe, King Prawns with Bamboo Piths, Fried Chicken Stuffed with Walnuts, Steamed Sia Long Pau, Wanton in Red Chili Sauce, Spare Ribs Shanghai Style, and Shanghai dumplings. Call 633-8888 local 2738 and 2739.

MANILA MIDTOWN HOTEL presents the American Food Festival. It features Barbecued Spareribs, Roasted Crown of Lambs with Peas and Potatoes, Mashed Brown Potatoes, Steamed Chicken with Onions in White Wine, Spinach with Onions in White Wine. The festival runs until Dec.1. Call 526-7001 local 6554.

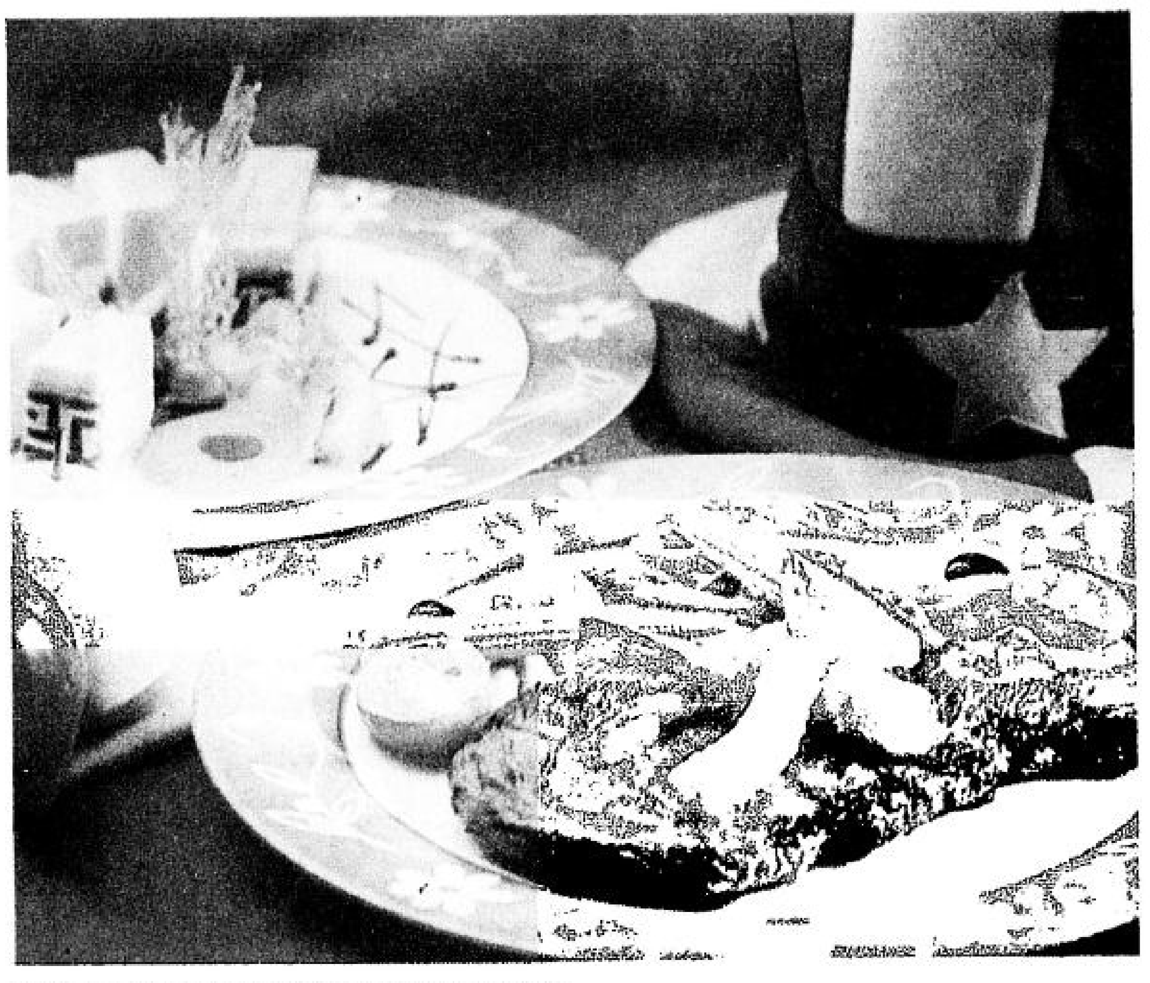
DUSIT Hotel Nikko offers Tord Mun Gung, shrimp cake with a light curry flavor, or Gung Sabai Hom, deep-fried prawns wrapped in egg noodles. There are also salads like Yam Pla Duk Foo, crispy catfish with green mango salad, or Khao Niew Som Tam, papaya salad with sticky rice or Larb Gai, spicy ground chicken salad. There is the Tom Yam Gung, hot prawn soup, or Tom Yam Sie Kaong Moo, pork spareribs in hot and sour soup, or Tom Kha Gai, chicken in coconut milk soup. For the main course, there are dip dishes like Lonpoo, coconut milk and crab meat sauce or Lon Gapi Qua, coconut milk and fried shrimp paste sauce; curried dishes like Panacng Gai, chicken in thick red curry or Gaeng Kiew Wan Neua, beef in green curry; and steamed dishes. Gai Hor Bai Toey. fried chicken wrapped in *pandan* leaf or Pla Prio Wan, sweet and sour fish, or Neam Tord, diced fine sour pork.

Puto bumbong and *bibingka* are also available at the Dusit's Hotel's Lobby Lounge. Call 867-3333 local 3351 to 3352.

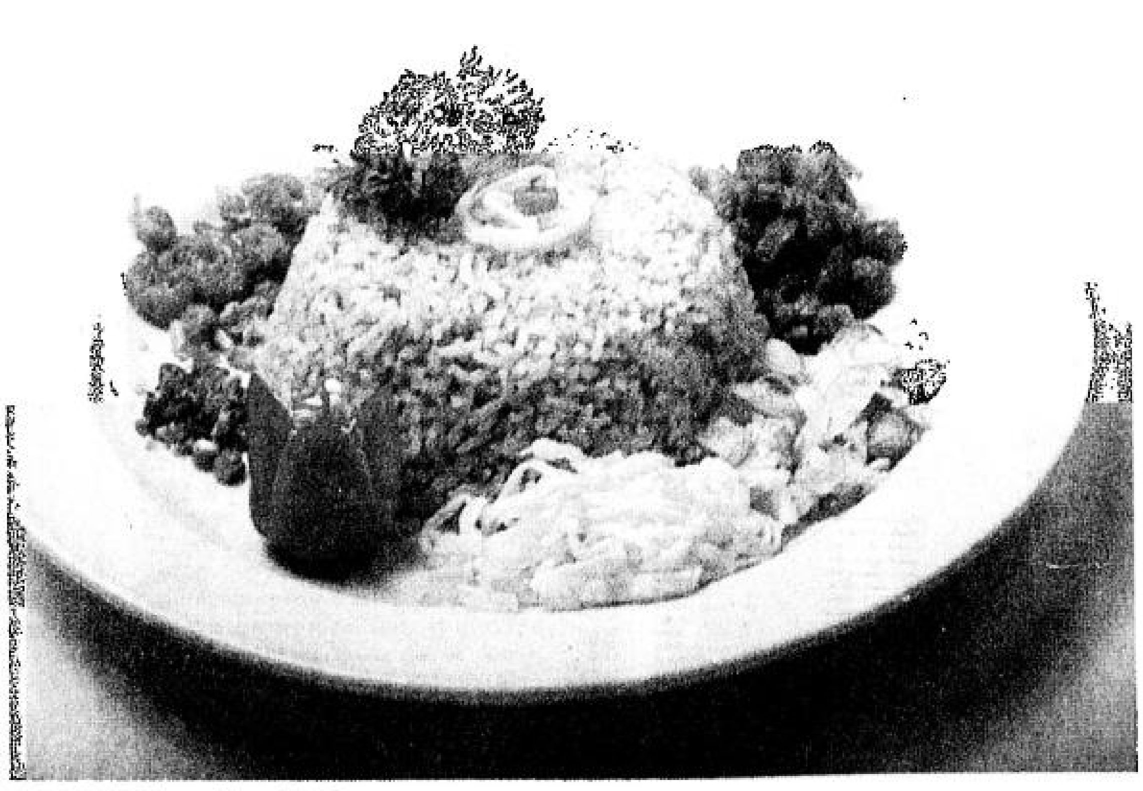
KOREAN Garden will formally reopen at its new and more convenient location: 128 Jupiter St., Bel-Air, Makati City. Korean Garden introduces Korean specialties like Bulgogi, Kalbi Kui, Bibimbap, Kujulpan and a wide variety of kimchi prepared by top Korean chefs. Call 895-5443 or 896-4361.



JUAN Miro's combo meals



AMERICANFood Festival at Manila Midtown Hotel



BAGOONG Rice at Kam Thai Restaurant

Nutrition movement supports Education Revolution

By Alfredo Hernandez
Contributor

EDUCATION and nutrition go together. According to director Thelma G. Santos of the Department of Education's Health and Nutrition Center (HNC), there's a need to bring down the high prevalence of nutritional deficiency afflicting majority of public school children today.

This is why she is enthusiastic about the Education Revolution, the movement launched by the Foundation for Worldwide People Power (FWWPP) to improve the conditions of public schools through the assistance of the private sector. The campaign, said Santos, provides the HNC with a "good vehicle" to generate awareness and support for the health and nutrition programs for public schools of the HNC.

The HNC has two major programs: the School Milk and Breakfast Feeding, for Grade 1 pupils. Both programs address "short-term hunger" that makes school children "easily distracted, inattentive and sleepy during class hours."

Santos said that the HNC will mobilize its 5,000-strong corps of medical officers, dentists, nurses and nutritionist-dieticians, to advocate the Education Revolution in the communities where they are assigned.

The HNC has invited the FWWPP to discuss the Education Revolution at its year-end review and planning workshop on Dec. 4-6. HNC Regional Health Unit staff from the 16 regions will be present.

New wave

In 1998, some 25 women went around Manila and neighboring provinces to campaign for Alfredo Lim for President. They got to know each other so well that after the elections, they continued to meet monthly.

They called themselves Wave (Women Always Vigilant for Excellence), and recently, they invited the FWWPP to tell them about the Education Revolution. Maur Lichauco, Sophie Limjap, Rosie Valencia, Vicky Delgado and Cora Tanjuatco met at Mariza V. del Rosario's Forbes Park house.

Being avid followers of the People Power concept, they did not need much time to be convinced of the need for education to fight poverty.

In three minutes, they were ready to vote to adopt a school in Tanay, Rizal, in which Cora Tanjuatco had been involved in weekly school feeding. The school only has two rooms for grades one, two and three, so teachers have to keep on moving students around.

Right there and then, the women of Wave collected and allocated P100,000 to build a new room.

Tanjuatco is now helping organize the adopting group for Pinugay Tandang Kutyo Elementary School in Tanay, Rizal.

Book assistance

Angie Santos, executive administrator of Books for the Barangay Foundation, says that her organization "helps provide quality education to Filipino children and youth through the mass distribution of books and educational materials to public elementary and high schools all throughout the country."

Books for the Barangay has a close working relationship with the hugely successful Books for the Barrios, US.

The author is the executive director of the FWWPP.

TOWN mayors, over a thousand of them meeting at the Manila Hotel last week, were introduced to the Education Revolution on Nov. 13. Brochures of the FWWPP are circulated at the League of Municipal Mayors General Assembly. In photo are (L-R) Alfredo G. Gabot of the Manila Bulletin and executive director of the Publishers Association of the Philippines, Pacifico Ll. Mayor, secretary general of the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP) and mayor of Ferriol, Romblon; Eugenia D. Apostol of the FWWPP, Ramon N. Guico Jr., national president of the LMP and mayor of Binalonan, Pangasinan; Ching Montinola, FWWPP volunteer, and Mario K. Aranguren of the LMP

Health officials welcome the campaign for the private sector to adopt public schools, noting that nutritional deficiency hampers public school learners

MAUR Lichauco

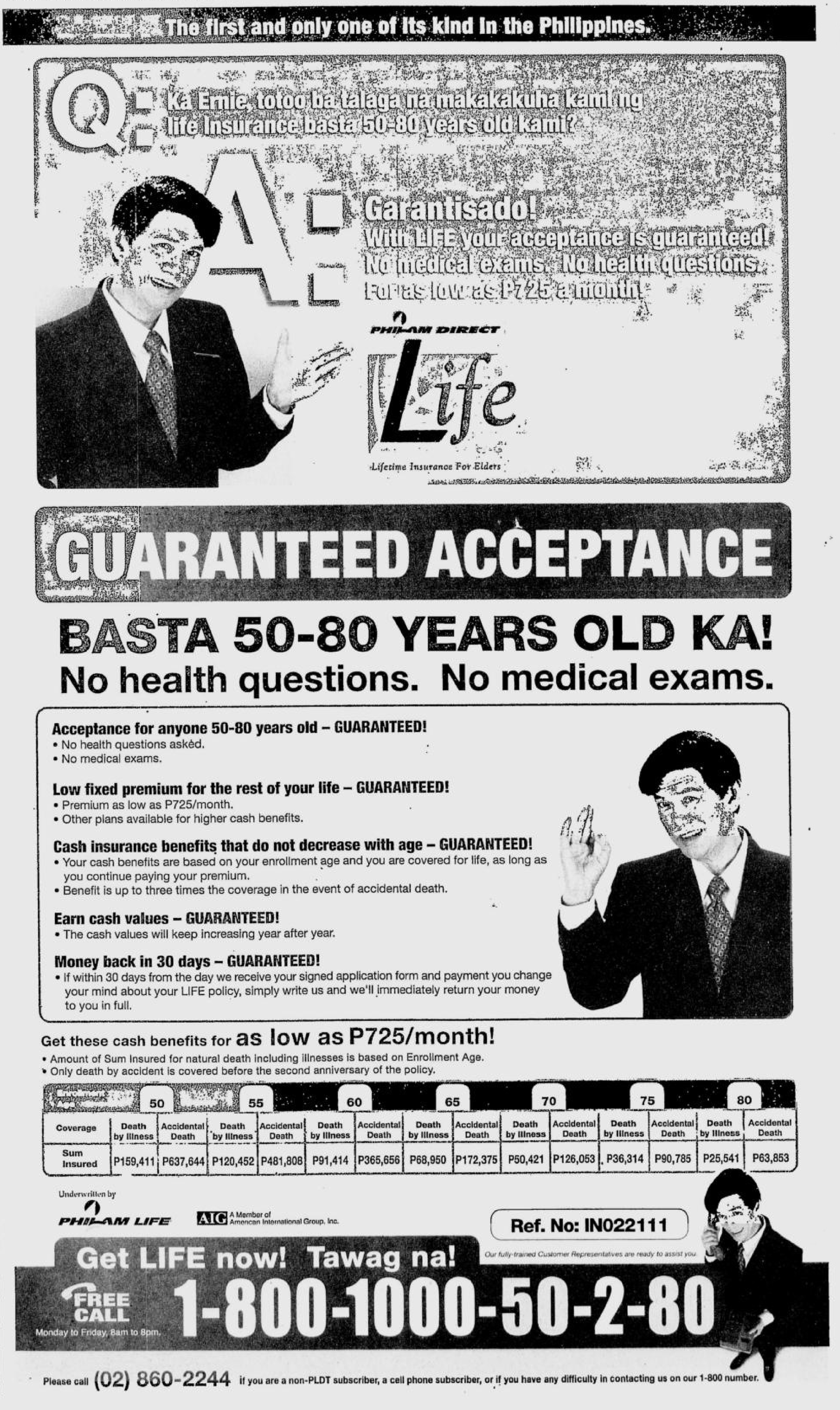
AIDA Lopez

VICKY Delgado

NENITA Banzon

RUBY Roxas and Pilar Garcia

SOPHIE Limjap and Rory Carreon



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- The cash values will keep increasing year after year.

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- Amount of Sum Insured for natural death including illnesses is based on Enrollment Age.
- Only death by accident is covered before the second anniversary of the policy.

	50		55		60		65		70		75		80	
Coverage	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death	Death by Illness	Accidental Death
Sum Insured	P159,411	P637,644	P120,452	P481,808	P91,414	P365,656	P68,950	P172,375	P50,421	P126,053	P36,314	P90,785	P25,541	P63,853

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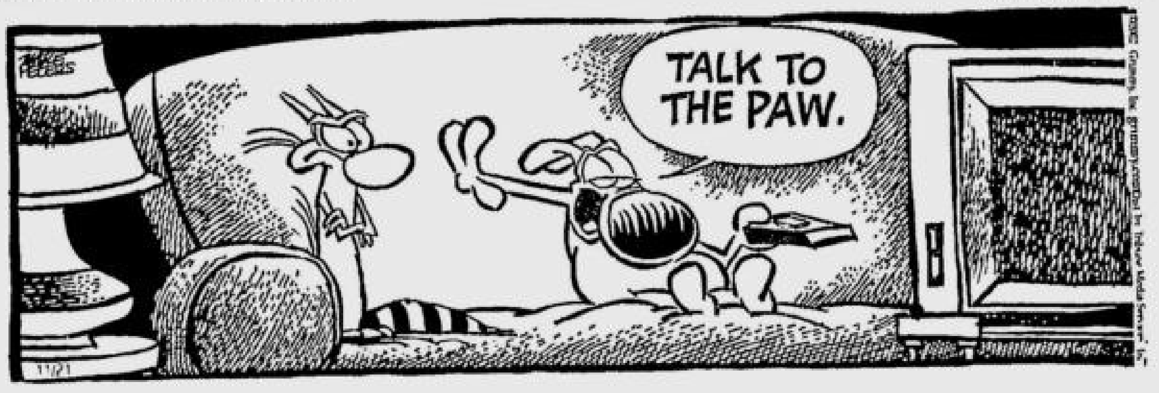
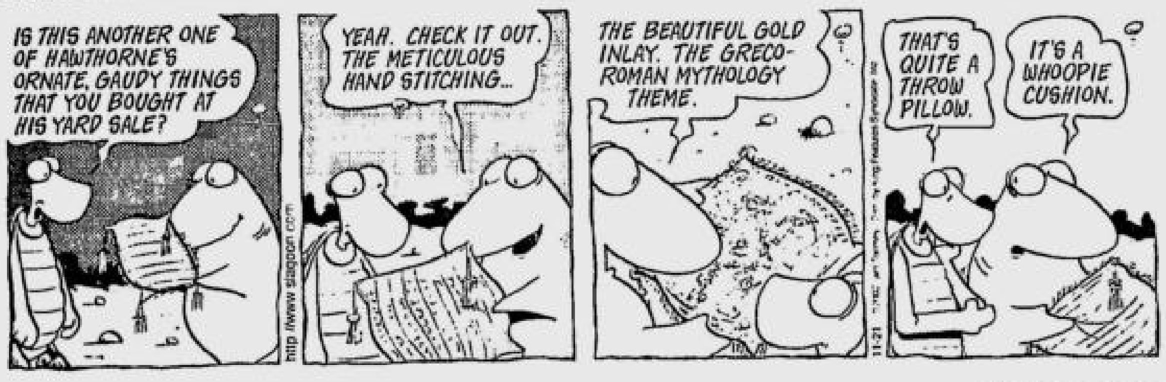
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2002

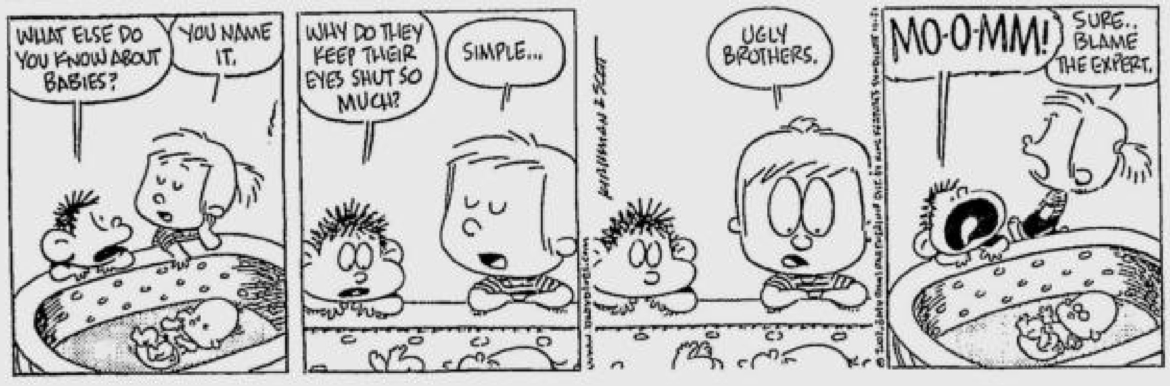
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


TALK TO THE PAW.
11/21

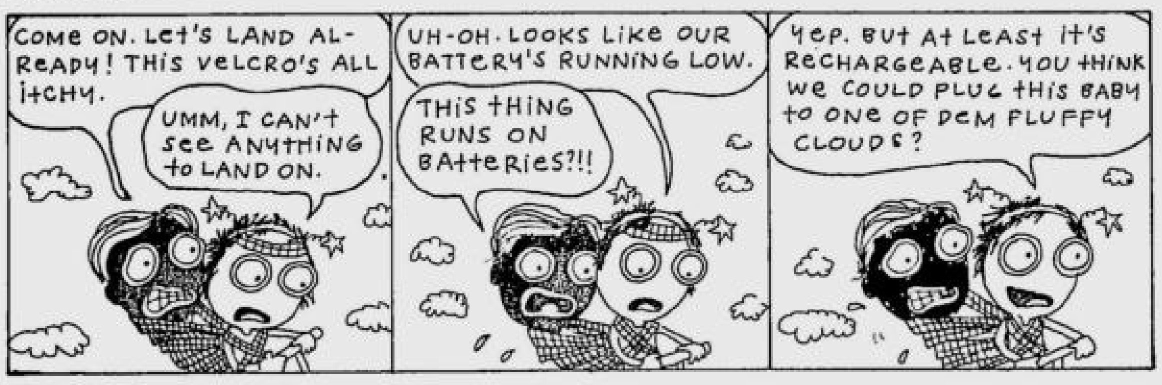
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


IS THIS ANOTHER ONE OF HAWTHORNE'S ORNATE, GAUDY THINGS THAT YOU BOUGHT AT HIS YARD SALE?
YEAH. CHECK IT OUT. THE METICULOUS HAND STITCHING...
THE BEAUTIFUL GOLD INLAY. THE GRECO-ROMAN MYTHOLOGY THEME.
THAT'S QUITE A THROW PILLOW.
IT'S A WHOOPIE CUSHION.
http://www.slagoon.com
11-21

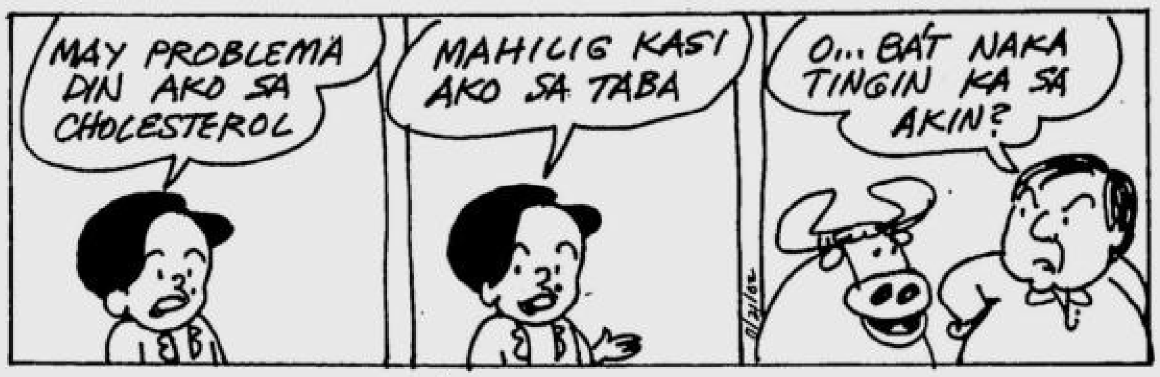
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT ELSE DO YOU KNOW ABOUT BABIES?
YOU NAME IT.
WHY DO THEY KEEP THEIR EYES SHUT SO MUCH?
SIMPLE...
UGLY BROTHERS.
MO-O-MM!
SURE.. BLAME THE EXPERT.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

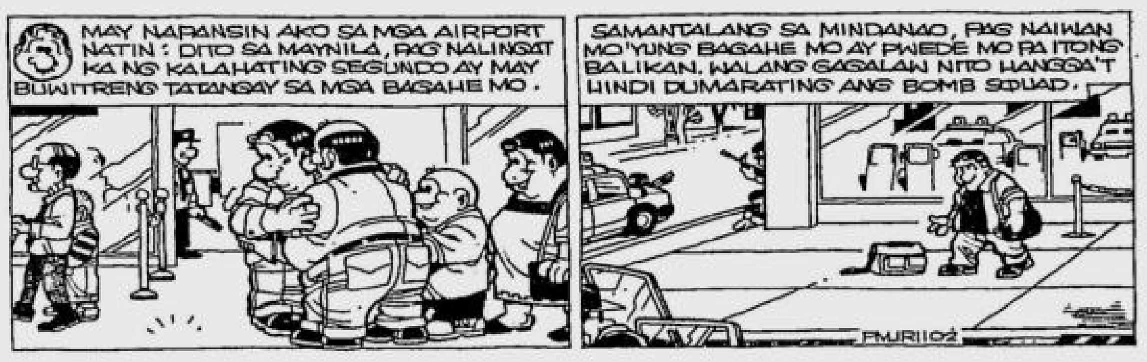
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


COME ON. LET'S LAND ALREADY! THIS VELCRO'S ALL ITCHY.
UMM, I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING TO LAND ON.
UH-OH. LOOKS LIKE OUR BATTERY'S RUNNING LOW.
THIS THING RUNS ON BATTERIES?!!
YEP. BUT AT LEAST IT'S RECHARGEABLE. YOU THINK WE COULD PLUG THIS BABY TO ONE OF DEM FLUFFY CLOUDS?

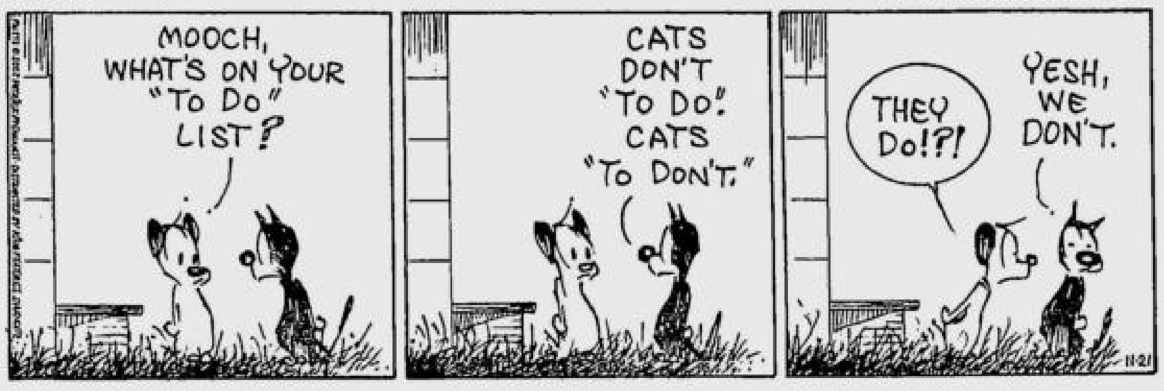
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


MAY PROBLEMA DIN AKO SA CHOLESTEROL
MAHILIG KASI AKO SA TABA
O... BAT NAKA TINGIN KA SA AKIN?
11/21/02

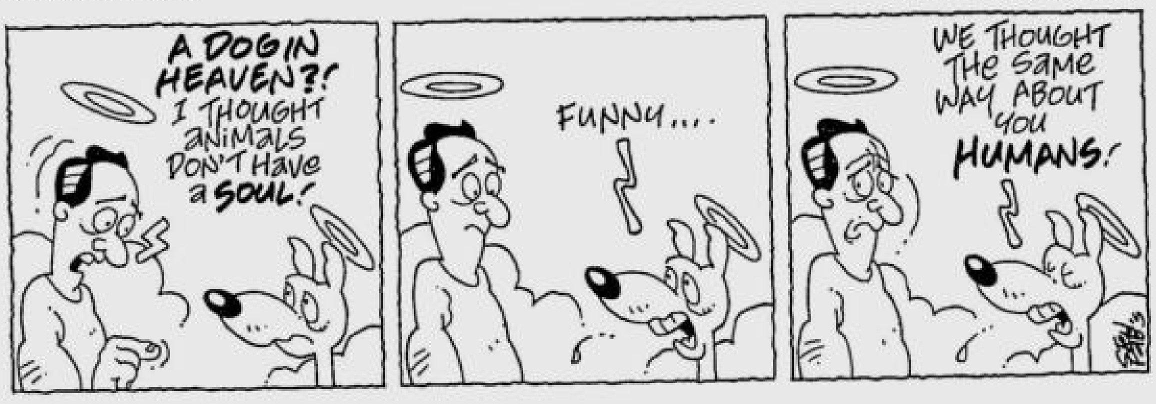
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY NAPANSIN AKO SA MGA AIRPORT NATIN: DITO SA MAYNILA, PAG NALINGAT KA NG KALAHATING SEGUNDO AY MAY BUWITRENG TATANGAY SA MGA BAGAHE MO.
SAMANTALANG SA MINDANAO, PAG NAIWAN MO 'YUNG BAGAHE MO AY PWEDE MO PA ITONG BALIKAN. WALANG GAGALAW NITO HANGGA'T HINDI DUMARATING ANG BOMB SQUAD.
PMJR11O2

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH, WHAT'S ON YOUR "TO DO" LIST?
CATS DON'T "TO DO". CATS "TO DON'T."
THEY DO!?!
YESH, WE DON'T.
11-21

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


A DOG IN HEAVEN?! I THOUGHT ANIMALS DON'T HAVE A SOUL!
FUNNY....
WE THOUGHT THE SAME WAY ABOUT YOU HUMANS!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Marlo Thomas, Goldie Hawn, Mariel Hemingway, Joseph Campanella, Dr. John

Happy Birthday: You have to fight for what's yours this year. The limitations of the past have lifted and it's time to put your life back in order. Learn from your past experiences and don't venture down avenues that appear to be risky. Use your intuitive guidance and follow your instincts. Your numbers are 6, 19. 28, 31, 33, 45

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Look for a promotion or a new position that will lead to financial gains. Be cautious that peers don't try to make you look bad. Don't leave yourself open for criticism and all should go smoothly.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You should be most concerned with your professional accomplishments. Don't let your personal life interfere with your career. The possibilities are endless.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Expand your circle of friends. Check out groups or organizations with similar interests to yours. This is a perfect time to consider having children.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Good partnerships can be fostered through the company you keep. Don't hesitate to get involved in humanitarian groups. Refrain from taking drastic measures when dealing with children.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Concentrate on work, not your personal life. You can accomplish more in the office than at home. However, make sure you don't neglect your domestic responsibilities entirely. Try to maintain a balance.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Travel plans should be made—either for business or pleasure, or both. You can get into self-improvement projects that will enhance your appearance. Avoid letting others influence your decisions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be careful what you consume: Weight gain is a strong possibility. Set up a health-conscious regimen for diet and exercise. Be proactive in all areas of your life.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): A friend or relative may lead you astray with opinions regarding your present situation. Listen but remember that you are the one who will suffer the consequences.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): The possibilities of meeting individuals who can promote your career objectives are grand. Don't hold back; enhance your reputation by using your charm and diplomacy.

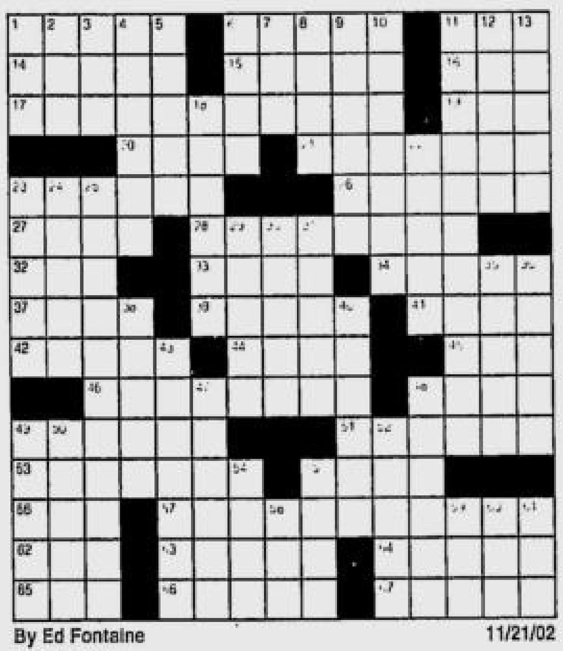
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Your changing attitudes could, in fact, cause you to alienate yourself from friends and family. Be careful not to ruffle feathers or make statements that could offend others.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Try not to get bogged down with tedious details. Maintain an overview of the situation. You should try to spend time catching up on reading or getting together with those who can offer you mental stimulation.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): New partnerships or friends can be established through travel or group activities. Don't partake in dubious get-rich-quick schemes. Contact a financial adviser before you put your cash on the table.

Birthday Baby: You'll be drawn to excitement and adventure. You will engage in a wide variety of interests that will bring you knowledge and a very versatile outlook.

DAILY CROSSWORD

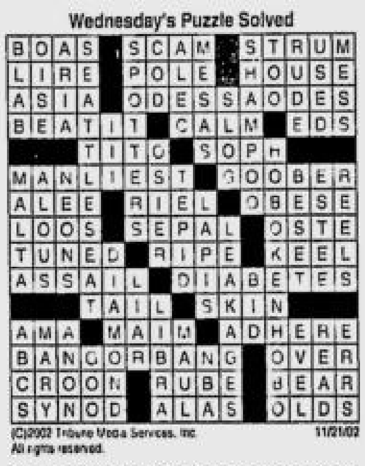


By Ed Fontaine
Dighton, MA
11/21/02

ACROSS
1 Settles down
6 Wide awake
11 Singer Bon Jovi
14 WWII vessel
15 Suburb of Cleveland
16 Of the ear: pref.
17 Pop group brother
19 WWII zone
20 Blurt
21 Very pale green
23 Mountain climber
26 Purplish red
27 Bulrush
28 Meerschaum part
32 Mine output
33 Port of Yemen
34 Slithering hisser
37 Rolling in dough
39 Camus play, "__ de siege"
41 Taj Mahal site
42 Skewered entree
44 In __ (in position)
45 Obtained
46 Sparkling
48 "__ kleine Nachtmusik"
49 Ill temper
51 Lament
53 Lunacy
55 Dimwit
56 Socialist grp.
57 Harmony group brother
62 Fragrant neckwear
63 Benefactor Yale
64 Muse of poets
65 European eagle
66 Change prices
67 Republican Roosevelt

DOWN
1 Magna __ laude
2 Lawyers' grp.
3 Singer Rawls
4 Statuary stone
5 Steps over a fence
6 Act as a lookout, e.g.
7 Support piece
8 Idle or Clapton
9 Medieval instruments
10 Alternative to capsules
11 Baseball brother
12 Preminger and Kruger
13 Nary a soul
18 __ tunnel syndrome
22 Type of stage
23 Long-legged bird
24 Radioactivity unit
25 Acting family brother
29 That is: Lat.
30 Little in Lille
31 Maternally related
35 Swedish cash
36 Corroded
38 Actress Uta
40 In a state of turmoil
43 Phlebotomist
47 Strip in a shoe
48 Magnate's purview
49 Grin
50 Rough handler
52 Ant
54 Annoying fit
55 Fake coin
58 Now I get it!
59 Boy from the Highlands
60 Inc. in Islington
61 Oriental sauce

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



B	O	A	S	■	S	C	A	M	■	S	T	R	U	M
L	I	R	E	■	P	O	L	E	■	H	O	U	S	E
A	S	I	A	■	O	D	E	S	S	A	O	D	E	S
B	E	A	T	I	T	■	C	A	L	M	■	E	D	S
■	■	■	T	I	T	O	■	S	O	P	H	■	■	■
M	A	N	L	I	E	S	T	■	G	O	O	B	E	R
A	L	E	E	■	R	I	E	L	■	O	B	E	S	E
L	O	O	S	■	S	E	P	A	L	■	O	S	T	E
T	U	N	E	D	■	R	I	P	E	■	K	E	E	L
A	S	S	A	I	L	■	D	I	A	B	E	T	E	S
■	■	■	T	A	I	L	■	S	K	I	N	■	■	■
A	M	A	■	M	A	I	M	■	A	D	H	E	R	E
B	A	N	G	O	R	B	A	N	G	■	O	V	E	R
C	R	O	O	N	■	R	U	B	E	■	D	E	A	R
S	Y	N	O	D	■	A	L	A	S	■	O	L	D	S

11/21/02

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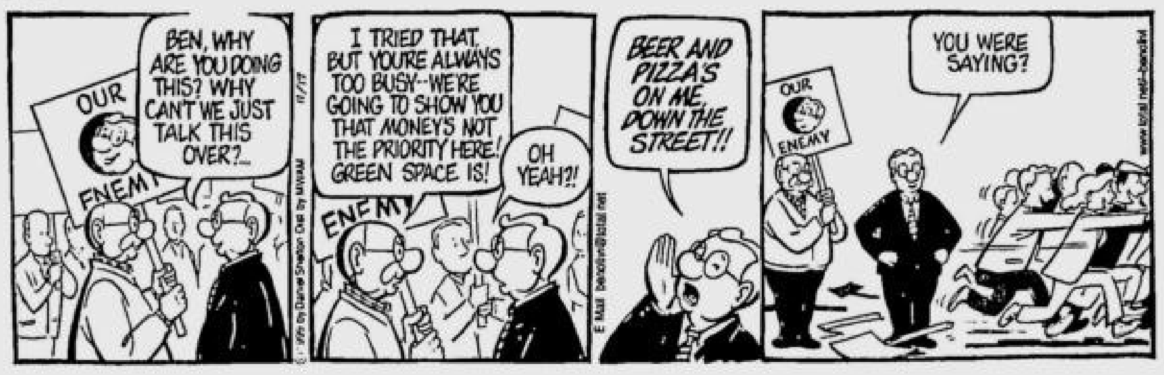
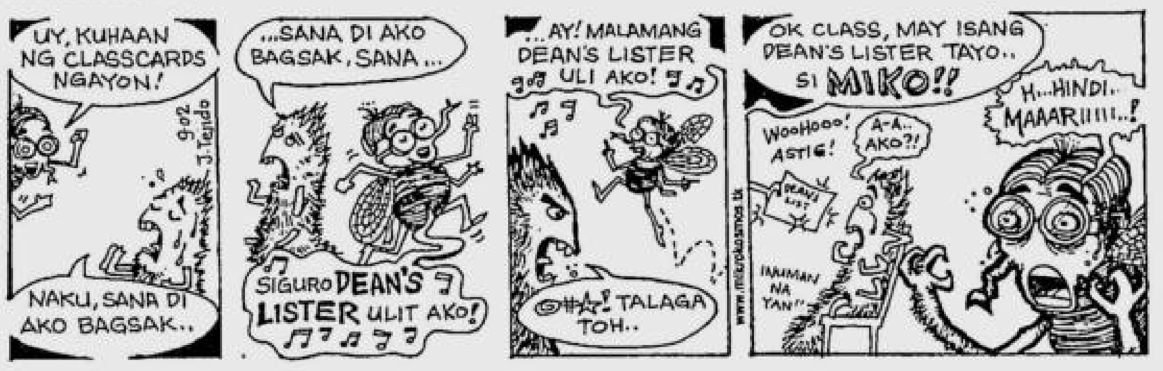
Stumped? Call 900-656-8900. 99 cents a minute

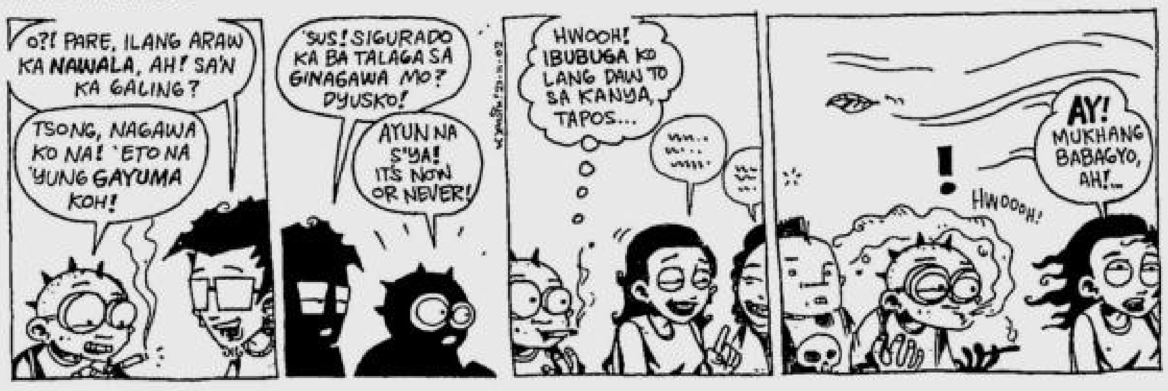
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


OUR ENEMY
BEN, WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS? WHY CAN'T WE JUST TALK THIS OVER?..
I TRIED THAT. BUT YOU'RE ALWAYS TOO BUSY--WE'RE GOING TO SHOW YOU THAT MONEY'S NOT THE PRIORITY HERE! GREEN SPACE IS!
OH YEAH?!
BEER AND PIZZA'S ON ME, DOWN THE STREET!!
OUR ENEMY
YOU WERE SAYING?

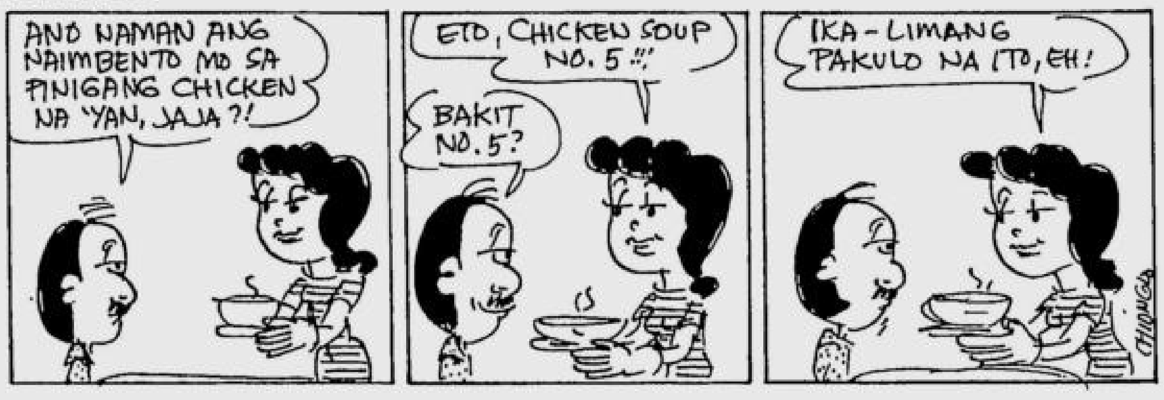
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


UY, KUHAAN NG CLASSCARDS NGAYON!
NAKU, SANA DI AKO BAGSAK..
...SANA DI AKO BAGSAK, SANA...
SIGURO DEAN'S LISTER ULIT AKO!
...AY! MALAMANG DEAN'S LISTER ULI AKO!
@#★! TALAGA TOH..
OK CLASS, MAY ISANG DEAN'S LISTER TAYO.. SI MIKO!!
WOOHOOO! ASTIG!
A-A.. AKO?!
H...HINDI.. MAAARIIIII..!
IMIMAN NA YAN!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

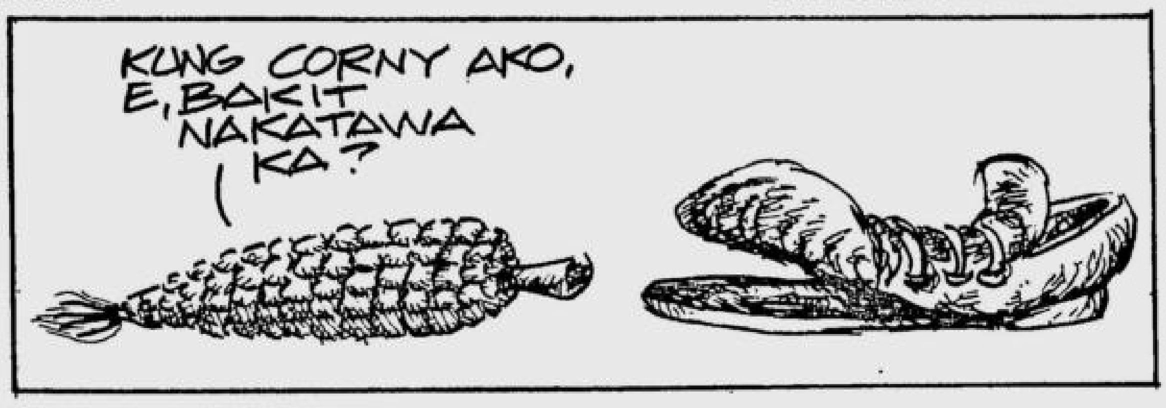
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


O?! PARE, ILANG ARAW KA NAWALA, AH! SA'N KA GALING?
TSONG, NAGAWA KO NA! 'ETO NA 'YUNG GAYUMA KOH!
'SUS! SIGURADO KA BA TALAGA SA GINAGAWA MO? DYUSKO!
AYUN NA S'YA! ITS NOW OR NEVER!
HWOOH! IBUBUGA KO LANG DAW TO SA KANYA, TAPOS...
!
HWOOOH!
AY! MUKHANG BABAGYO, AH!..

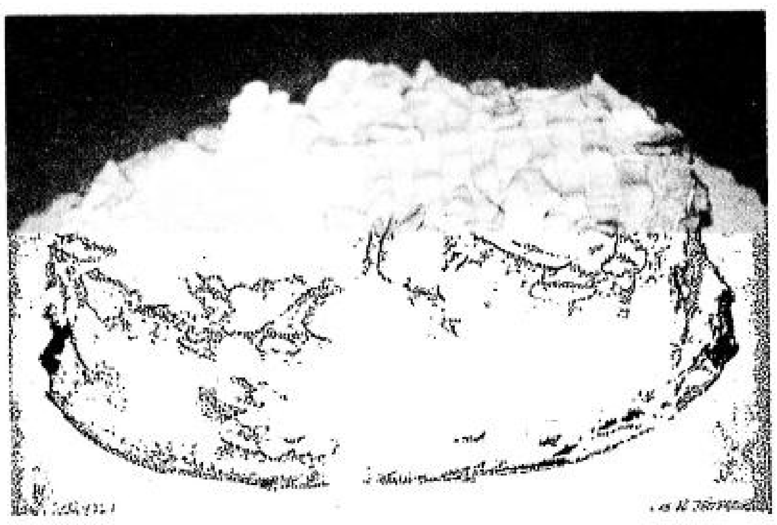
LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANO NAMAN ANG NAIMBENTO MO SA PINIGANG CHICKEN NA 'YAN, JAJA?!
ETO, CHICKEN SOUP NO. 5!!
BAKIT NO. 5?
IKA-LIMANG PAKULO NA ITO, EH!
CHIONGLO

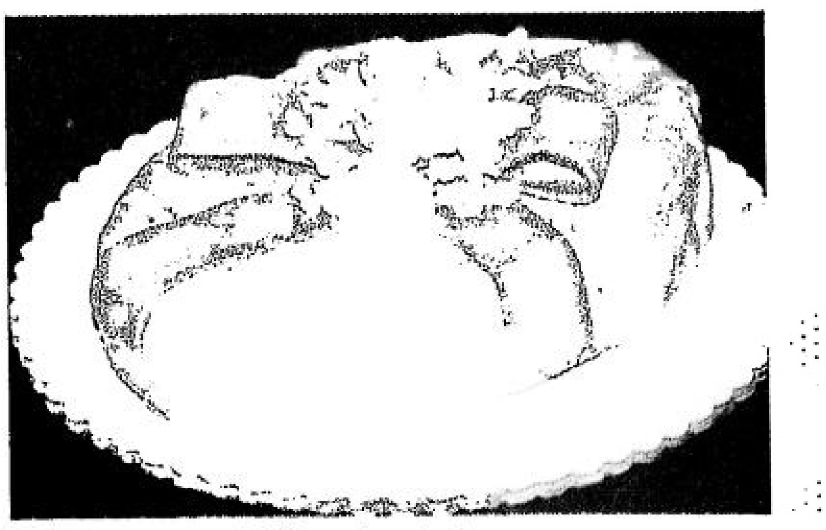
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KUNG CORNY AKO, E, BAKIT NAKATAWA KA?

MARBLED green fondant gift cake with gold balls



WILTON-DESIGNED buttercream cake with basketweave patterns and flowers



PINK fondant cake with lilac and rosebuds

Vicky and the unwilting art of Wilton cake decorating

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

Before the year is over, the world-famous course will be taught here by a certified instructor

FINALLY, there's an official spokesperson and culinary instructor in the Philippines for the famous Wilton School of Cake Decorating and Confectionary Art based in Chicago. That person is Vicky Veloso-Barrera.

Vicky is preparing for her first Wilton Method Cake Decorating class next month. It will be the first time a class certified by Wilton will be held in the Philippines.

But Vicky will first assist New York-based Tinggay Avena-Castillo, an experienced Wilton Method instructor, on Dec. 3 and 4, in conducting Course 1, which includes an introduction to the basic cake techniques plus rose flower making. Tinggay has been teaching the Wilton Method of Cake Decorating for the past eight years in New York.

On Dec. 10 and 11, Tinggay and Vicky will teach Course 2, which includes more complicated flower and basketweave designs. Classes are from 6-8 p.m. Students who complete the course will receive a Wilton certificate.

Couture to cuisine

As everyone in the fashion industry knows, Vicky was a fashion designer who one day dropped her pencils and patterns for pots and pans to pursue her hobby in cooking and baking. The sudden "change of heart" happened a few years ago. Now, Vicky is an accomplished cookbook author, food writer and cooking teacher. She has, so far, five cookbooks in her name. Combining her passions for both cooking and writing, she has produced "Tiny Kitchen" and "Cooking for Two" a few years ago. This year, she has written "Not So Tiny Kitchen," "A Worldwide Feast," and the soon-to-be-launched "Kape: A Philippine Coffee Cookbook."

Vicky has also been conducting cooking and classes for kids and adults in her home in Pasay City.

Given Vicky's culinary credentials, it wasn't really a surprise that Vicky has become the official spokesperson and certified instructor of Wilton.

It all happened so fast. Vicky happened to be holding cooking classes at Gourdo's, the specialty cookware store located at The Fort. Since Gourdo's is the exclusive distributor of Wilton's quality cake decorating equipments in the country, it offered Vicky the chance to train and become a certified Wilton instructor.

"I went to Taipei (where most training courses for Wilton teachers in the Asian region are held) to train with top Wilton teachers like Rosemarie Wallace and Cora Smith," Vicky says. Incidentally, these two women wrote the course books that every Wilton student uses.

"I learned the rudiments and complexities of cake decorating as well as the intricate designs of sprucing up cakes done the traditional Wilton method."

Proud history

The Wilton School of Cake Decorating and Confectionary Art has a proud history of decorative excellence for over 70 years. It was in 1929 that Dewey McKinley Wilton first began to teach the now-famous Wilton Method, a cake decorating tradition enhanced by continually developing and ever-refining creativity. Vicky says as the cake decorating arts evolve in the new millennium, the Wilton School grows along with them, covering alternative English and Australian methods, newer pulled sugar and gum paste techniques plus candy making classes. But the craftsmanship and the fine artistry first taught by Wilton from his home in Chicago remain the foundation of the continually advancing "Wilton Method."

To complement its classes, Wilton sells a wide array of bake ware, theme cake pans, special icing colors, decorative sprinkles, a complete selection of icing bags and decorative tips and books that most chefs and food experts in Manila often use.

Holiday classes

Meanwhile, Vicky is holding her own cooking classes geared towards the holidays. The classes, to be held at Gourdo's at The Fort, are divided into two sessions, for adults and kids. On Nov. 23, 10 a.m.-12 nn, Vicky will teach a class called "Edible Gifts," offering unique food items ideal for gift-giving, such as small fondant gift cakes and poinsettia lollipop cookies. The afternoon class, 2-4 p.m., is a simplified version for children.

On Dec. 7, the class will be "More Holiday Decorating Ideas." Adults, for the morning class, will make Christmas tree cookies and canapes, while the children will make Christmas ball cookies and burgers.

On Dec. 14, the class is called "Noche Buena: The Flavors of Umbria." Fly Ace Corp., purveyors of fine Italian ingredients like Pietro Coricelli olive oils and Federici pasta, will sponsor the ingredients for the class, which focuses on the specialties of the beautiful Umbrian region north of Rome. Menus for adults in the morning class include roast lamb, crostini with assorted spreads. In the afternoon, kids get to concoct easy pasta sauce.

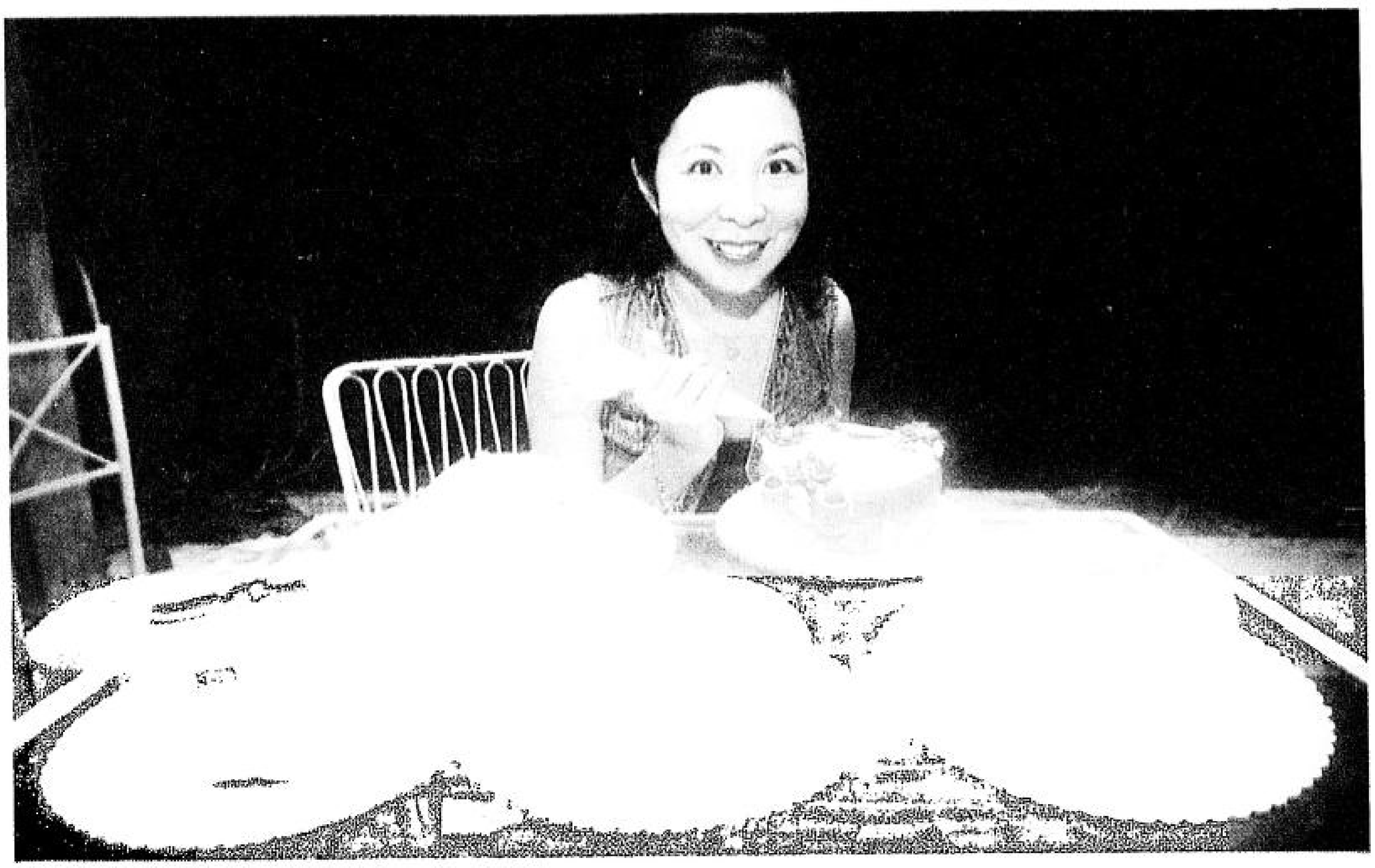
Fondant cakes

And just in time for the holidays, Vicky presents her new line of small fondant cakes decorated to look and become edible gifts. They come in different colors and designs, featuring royal icing poinsettias, fondant bows and other hand-made details. The cakes inside can be orange almond, chocolate, date walnut or California fruitcake (dried fruits like apricots and dates rather than candied fruits).

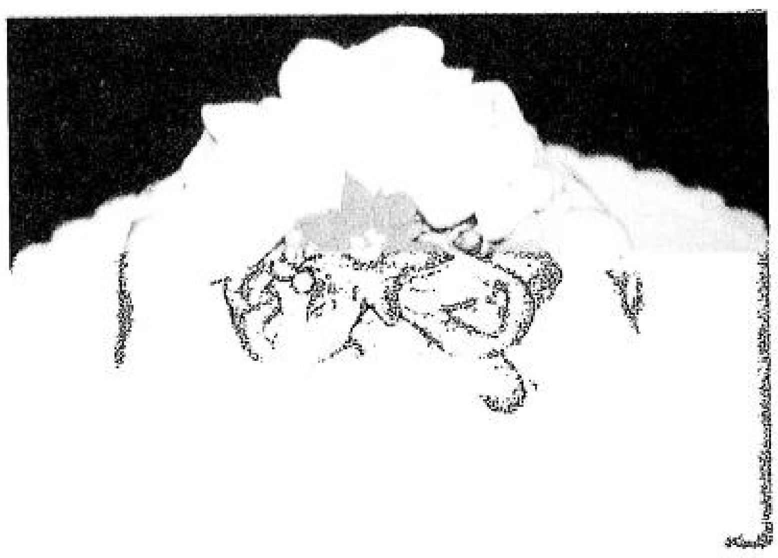
The cakes incorporate details Vicky learned in her Wilton classes; other designs are self-taught. Vicky says each cake takes almost a day to make, from baking the cake to the buttercream and fondant icings to the final assembly with royal icing poinsettias made days ahead of time because they need to dry. Rather than typical Christmas motifs like Christmas trees, Vicky prefers to focus on making the cakes look like gifts and accents them with the painstakingly learned poinsettias and other Wilton-taught flowers.

Call Gourdo's at 887-0150 or Vicky at 843-1303 and 844-7917.

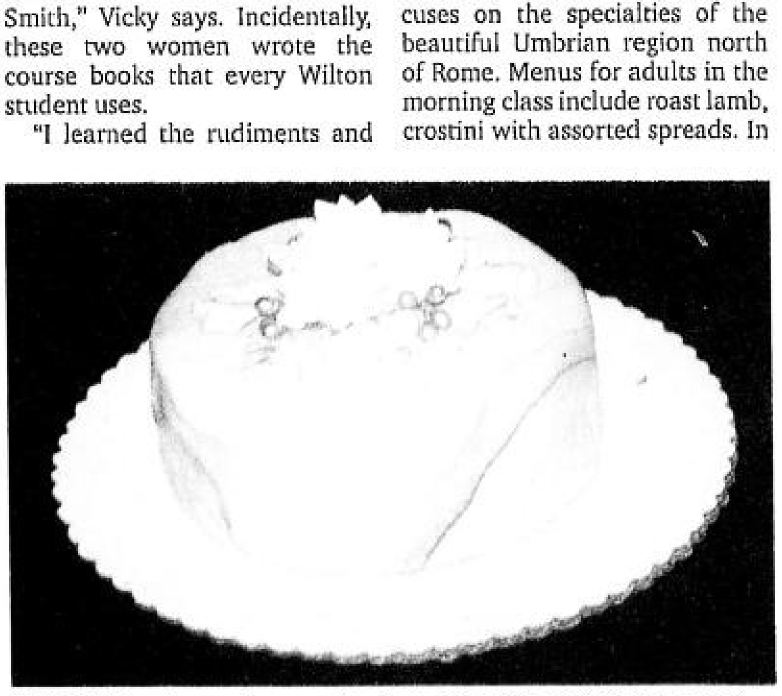
E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph



VICKY Veloso-Barrera ices the last of her cakes the Wilton way



MARBLED lavender fondant cake with gold ball and red poinsettia



MARBLED yellow and orange fondant cake with curly ribbons, gold balls and white poinsettia

BROTHERS BURGER
Satisfy your urge!
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The subtleties of Filipino food

THE JOYFUL COOK

Felice Prudente Sta. Maria

LIVING near both coastline and farmland made it relatively easy for The Joyful Cook to procure fresh ingredients. Freshness characterizes traditional Filipino cuisine. There is a national preference for fresh vegetables, meats, seafood, poultry and even rice grain. Freshness can be tasted. It is demanded especially of anything from waterscape.

The archipelago's diverse cultures began near water—whether seashore or riverbank. Both environs produced fish. Even ricelands spawned seasonal varieties.

Freshness

"We are a water people," thought The Joyful Cook, as she wrote a note to Mang Ising. He was well-sculpted by honest labor and wonderfully bronzed by sunlight. Friends were arriving for the weekend. Mang Ising would be her partner in designing the menu. Everything depended on what he caught.

"I have 10 visitors coming who can appreciate your effort at providing us the plumpest *lapu-lapu* for steaming whole. If possible, I'd like a *dalagang bukid* for poaching, two small fillets per guest. I also need the tiniest, sweetest squid and several large ones for their ink sacks. Can you also find seagrape?" she printed out in his language. "In case they are not available, I trust you will send me something else appropriate for my guests. One of them enjoyed the *pampano* you brought us during his last visit."

Filipino words are like Filipino food: they're meant to be tasted

TJC appreciated that a definite advantage of living near the shore was her direct contact and friendship with fishers. Nearby farmers also cultivated small-scale kitchen gardens providing fresh vegetables and proximity to height-of-season savors.

Ripeness

Elder farmers and their wives had a precise vocabulary for the full range of ripeness. Mura (MOO-rah), like *bubot* (BOO-boht), describes fruit and even grain as young, unripe, still green. *Malabayawak* (mah-lah-bah-YAH-wahk), which literally means "lizard-like," refers specifically to *santol* fruit when it is still light green to greenish and not to be picked or eaten.

The next major stage toward ripeness is *manibalang* (mah-nee-bah-LAHNG), nearly ripe. Between *bubot* and *manibalang* is *biglaw* (BEEG-law), also used to mean not quite raw, *hilaw* (HEE-lau). *Hinog* (HEE-nohg), ripeness is the goal. Almost *hinog* and clearly beyond *manibalang* are fruits called *hilag* (hee-LAHG). Similarly, coconuts are described as *malahipon* (mah-lah-HEE-pohn) just before full maturity. When selecting fruits and vegetables, shoppers must beware of superficially ripe fruits, those that look ripe but are not, what elders call *yapsaw* (yahp-SAU). *Lulot* (loo-LOHT) means fruits and vegetables that are already over-ripe. *Lumon* (loo-MOHN) classifies produce as in an advanced stage of ripeness but not yet rotten.

Rottenness

Tagalog farmers have words for edibles past their prime. *Laos* (lah-OS), *layos* (lah-YOS) and *nalayos* (nah-lah-YOS) are for fruits that have soured or fermented because they are over-ripe. While pinching is one method to test ripeness, too much pinching destroys produce, turning them *buog* (BOO-ugh). *Buog*, a cause-specific rottenness, is also used to mean—like *laog* (LAH-ugh), *bulok* (BOO-luhk) and *lulot* (LOO-loht)—fruits picked out of season. Even the rotten part of a fruit that has been neglected has a singular term, *bungkok* (BOONG-kohk).

Putrid fruit is called *lanas* (LAH-nahs); putrid fish is *bilasa* (bee-LAH-sah), *halpok* (HAHL-pohk), *bulok* (BOO-lohk), *sira* (SEE-rah). *Bugok* (BOO-gohk) means rotten, too, and is used usually for eggs.

Stale, spoiled food is *panis* (PAH-nees). Just before becoming *panis*, food develops slight acidity or fermentation, the noun for the condition being *kasim*, a clear cousin to the word *asim* (AH-seem), sour. Bahasa Indonesian's synonyms for *kasim* are *asam* and *peragian*; Malay synonyms are *masam* and *peram*.

"How important it is to maintain the subtleties in the way we observe life," thought TJC. "Words are a clue to how we think, how we reason and understand our surroundings. I miss writing Filipino with diacritical marks that make pronunciation clear and show how the national culture values preciseness."

Farmers' wives and sisters usually manage market stalls. They are experts in identifying the stages of readiness for ingredients. They know where to gently pat or pinch, where to smell, how to shake, where to tap. Their eyes tell by shades of color whether a fruit or vegetable is appropriate for pickling, brining, making into a syrupy preserve, boiling, or eating raw. But their skills are not documented. Yet their abilities to reckon ripeness and its variations are an experiential process using all senses. The market, the farm, the shoreline are exciting learning spaces that generate cultural identity.

Good company

The weekend came as did the freshest pick of the catch. The friends motored to nearby historical spots meaningful to the Philippine Revolution. They visited parish churches built in Spanish colonial times and marveled at the native artisanship and hard labor that still stood ready to excite the senses and the imagination.

Every meal from Friday dinner to Sunday *merienda* was TJC's expression of friendship, as she brought out large serving platters of *calamares en su tinta*, *lapu-lapu* steamed till just tender and not overdone, *dalagang bukid* poached in white wine and served with *béchamel*, and a host of other heirloom recipes and new innovations. Undoubtedly the food and the wine were commendable.

"Thank you all for coming," said The Joyful Cook. "It is because you bring wit and wisdom that the table acquires pleasure and meaning."

Saint Sandok gave them his blessings as they consumed every last drop of aged basi. "No matter what the cook does, good company and good conversation are the best ingredients in any cooking," he sighed.

Next: How it takes two to be hospitable

Mix business with pleasure

SPEND your nights mixing pleasure with business at the Maya Kitchen Culinary Arts Center. Enroll in the evening courses from 5:30 to 9 p.m. Explore your culinary skills while learning how to start a food business. Enroll in Catering on Nov. 21-22, and obtain an in-depth know-how on Portion Control; Costing; Inventory; Table Layout and Equipment Sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes: morcon, galantina, pork asado, soy chicken, roast pork, baked macaroni, all-meat paella and special dessert; Bakery & Bakeshop class where you will learn commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes, including costing, production batching; and Japanese Cooking with featured recipes: miso soup, mixed tempura, sukiyaki, kamameshi; assorted sushi; kappamaki, tekamaki, California maki and nigiri.

Career cooks can enroll in Cooking II on Nov. 20-22 or Dec. 4-6, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Also on the same dates, 1:30-5 p.m., are Baking I and Messmen, Stewards and Beginners. Cooking I is on Nov. 26-29, 1:30-5 p.m.

Visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays-Saturdays) at 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue. (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 892-1185 or 892-5011 local 108.

Baking and cooking classes for the holidays

DOROTHY'S Cooking will offer baking and cooking classes for the coming holidays.

The classes are as follows: For the Love of Chocolate 1, Nov. 21, and For the Love of Chocolate 6, Dec. 7, featuring luscious chocolate desserts; Just Packaging, Nov. 23, showcasing lots of packaging ideas using unusual food containers and usual materials and containers made unusual; Just Desserts, Nov. 26; and Kitchen Specialties 1, Nov. 28, for those who would like to bake and sell for the coming holidays; Lots of Casseroles and Pasta, Dec. 1 and 3, for a hassle-free dinner or potluck; and From Soup to Dessert, Dec. 5, for a whole Christmas menu that is affordable and festive.

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